

CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

N^o. 12.]

DECEMBER, 1802.

[N^o. 12. Vol. I.]

RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

AN ACCOUNT OF CLEMENS ROMANUS.

*(Continued from page 695.)*CONTINUATION OF THE ABSTRACT OF HIS
EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

LET US not, my beloved, join with such as exclaim, "Where is the promise of his coming?" Let us rather consider the evidence, which the succession of day and night, and the dissolution and growth of seeds, afford of that resurrection, of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the first fruits: we shall not then think it strange that God should raise those up who trust in him and serve him. Having this hope, let our hearts be fixed on him who is faithful to his promises, and just in his judgments, and who cannot lie. And as we cannot flee from God, who sees and hears all things, and who comprehends all things in his embrace, let us stand in awe of him, laying aside every impure desire, and wicked work, that through his mercy we may be saved from future condemnation. Let us also love him who has made us the objects of his choice, and draw nigh to him with pure hands and a holy heart: and being his portion, let us carefully abstain from evil speaking, abominable lusts and impurity of every kind, and from that pride which is hateful to God; and let us practise universal holiness. Let us be clothed with concord, being chaste and humble, avoiding all detraction, and being justified by our works, not by our speeches: for shall a man full of talk be justified? God hates such as exalt themselves. Arrogance and presumption characterize those who are accursed of him; but meekness, humility, and gentleness, those whom he blesses.

Let us then lay fast hold of his blessing; and that we may know how it is to be obtained, let us consider what has

taken place from the beginning. Was not Abraham blessed, because through faith he wrought righteousness? Isaac also, in the confident persuasion of what was to happen, cheerfully yielded himself a sacrifice. These were greatly honoured, not for their own sakes, or on account of their works, or the righteousness which they had wrought, but through the will of God: and we, in like manner, being called by his will in Christ Jesus, are not justified by ourselves, neither by our wisdom, knowledge, nor piety, nor even by those works which we have performed in holiness of heart; but by that faith, whereby the Almighty has justified all men from the beginning.

But shall we on this account, my brethren, be slothful to perform good works, and forsake the law of love? God forbid! Let us unweariedly fulfil his will, and with all our powers, work the work of righteousness. The faithful labourer receives the bread of his labour; but the indolent and remiss cannot meet the eye of their employer. We must, therefore, not be slothful in the performance of any good work. Let us be subject to his will, as the angels are, and being gathered together with one heart, as well as in one place, let us, with one accord, earnestly cry unto him, that we may be made partakers of his glorious promises.

Beloved, how wonderful are the gifts of God! The hope of immortal life! glory begun in righteousness! assured faith! and holy moderation! These are the effects of his bounty which we discern and feel even now; but the excellency and extent of those things which are prepared for them that wait for him in faith and patience, God only

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knoweth. In this way, therefore, we have found Jesus Christ our Saviour, the High Priest of our oblations, and the helper of our weakness: by him, who is the brightness of the Divine Majesty, are our minds opened: by him are our darkened understandings enlightened: by him we enjoy the knowledge of immortality; while his enemies, even the wicked who oppose their own wills to the will of God, shall be made his footstool.

Let us also in our warfare as Christians, imitate the order and discipline of soldiers in an army, considering that all are not generals, or tribunes, or centurions, but to every one a station is appointed by the commander, and in that station he remaineth. The great cannot subsist without the little, nor the little without the great. Let, therefore, the body of Christ be preserved and united in us; let every one be subject to his neighbour in charity, in that station wherein he is placed. Let not the strong condemn the weak; and let the weak pay respect to the strong. The rich ought to be bountiful to the poor; and the poor ought to bless God for having raised up for him a benefactor. The wise ought to prove his wisdom, not by words, but by good works. The humble ought to leave it to another to praise him; and the chaste ought not to be high-minded, knowing from whom he hath received the gift of continence. Let us, in short, consider who and what we are, and how he who formed us, prevented us with his benefits even before we were born. In obedience to his commands, every thing ought to be done in due order; our oblations ought to be made, and our religious offices performed, at stated and regular seasons, as well as at the places, and by the persons whom he, by his authority, hath appointed; that being thus done according to his will, they may be acceptable to him. Moreover to the High Priest, by the Levitical law, are assigned his peculiar functions; and the Priests and Levites each fill their proper stations; but the Layman is to confine himself to such things as are commanded to Laymen. The appointed sacrifices, also, are only offered at Jerusalem; and they who trans-

gress this order, shall die the death. But, my brethren the greater is your knowledge, the greater also is your danger, if ye transgress.

Jesus Christ was sent by God to preach the Gospel, the Apostles by Christ, and both according to the will of God. When, therefore, they went forth, and preached the word in provinces and cities, they ordained the first fruits of their ministry, after having proved them by the spirit, to be bishops and deacons over such as should believe. Our Apostles likewise, being informed beforehand by our Lord Jesus Christ, foresaw that strife would arise respecting the name and office of bishops, for which reason they made the appointments already mentioned, and afterwards laid down a rule for the succession, that when they themselves should fall asleep, other approved men might follow in their office and ministry.* Wherefore we do not think that such as were appointed by them, or other chosen men, with the consent and approbation of the whole Church, and who have exercised their ministry blamelessly, humbly, gently, and disinterestedly, can be justly deprived of their office. It would be no small sin in us to do so. But happy are those presbyters who are already departed in peace and joy, and have no longer any fear of such a deposition as ye have inflicted upon some pious and blameless ministers who are yet alive. Ye are, indeed, contentious brethren, and zealous about things which belong not to salvation. But search the Scriptures, which are the true words of the Holy Spirit: nothing perverse or unjust is written there. There you will not find that righteous men were ever cast off or persecuted by holy men, but by the wicked and unjust. But be ye joined to the innocent and the righteous,

* It is impossible calmly to weigh the arguments incidentally introduced by St. Clement, in this place, without acknowledging that it furnishes good ground for considering the three orders of ministers which exist in our Church as agreeable to the apostolical institution. The Apostles and their successors, to whom the name of *Επισκοποι* was afterwards appropriated, correspond to our Bishops; the Elders or Presbyters to our Priests; and the Ministers to our Deacons. (See Christ. Observ. p. 575 and 717.)

for they are the elect of God. Why do wrath, contentions, schisms, and warfare, rage among you? Have we not one God and one Christ? Is not one spirit of grace poured out upon our hearts? And have we not one calling in Christ? Why then do we rend in pieces the members of his body, nay, why do we stir up sedition against our own body? forgetting, in our madness, that we are members one of another? Your schism hath subverted the faith of many; it hath caused that of many to totter; it hath given grief to all of us; and yet you allow it to continue.

Who among you has a generous and tender heart? who is endued with compassion and love? Let him say, if these contentions and these scisms be on my account, I will depart whithersoever you will, only let the flock of Christ continue in peace under its appointed ministers.

Let us pray, likewise, for those who have fallen into sin, that they may be renewed in meekness and lowliness of mind, that so they may submit, not to us, but to the will of God. Let us, also revive the spirit of discipline which used to give no offence, for reproof is profitable to us, and it unites us to the will of God. And ye who have caused this sedition, repent and submit yourselves to your Presbyters, bending the *knees* of your hearts; laying aside pride and arrogance; for it is better for you to be little, but approved in the fold of Christ; than to be high-minded, and to be cast out.

Now may the all seeing God, the ruler of our spirits, and the Lord of all flesh, who hath chosen our Lord Jesus Christ, and us through him, to be his peculiar people, grant to every soul which calleth upon his glorious name, faith, fear, peace, patience, long-suffering, temperance, holiness, and wisdom, through our great Master and High Priest, Jesus Christ, through whom be unto him all glory, majesty, power, and honour, both now and ever. Amen.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

HAVING noted in one of your numbers an allusion to the Prophecies relating to the Turks, and supposing that you had

the Apocalypse in view, I was pleased to find that you were not in the number of the *despisers of prophesyings*, and that you judiciously called your readers attentions to this particular prediction. It is, indeed, one of the clearest prophecies in Scripture, and most generally understood; nor do I find any material discordance among the Protestant interpreters, till they reach the tenth chapter of the Apocalypse*. The great chain of interpretation is there first broket, and the ordinary reader confounded by variety of opinions, and led to cast away the sacred book in doubt and perplexity. Here then is a *dignus vindice nodus*, the *jugulum causa*, and I could much wish to see this particular place connected with the subsequent chapters, by a skillful interpreter. In the mean time permit me to offer a few remarks on the subject. I believe it will be allowed by most, that the sixth trumpet is the second woe (Rev. viii. 13.), or the introduction of an enemy which *triumphs* during his allotted time over the Anti-Christians. This enemy is said to be bound *on* or *by* the Euphrates (1 Esd. i. 25. Sept.) in allusion to the restraint of the Turks, by the Crusaders, (Rev. ix. 14.) Their period of triumph is limited, at ver. 15. to three hundred and ninety-one days, or prophetic years, during which they continue the slaughter of the third part of men. The Turks are so clearly pictured in the remaining verses, that all Protestant interpreters of any eminence, from the time of Mr. Brightman to that of Bishop Newton, consider the meaning almost as self-evident. Nor do I find any material disagreement in their statement of the epoch of the victorious period of the Turks. The latest epoch is that of Mr. Whiston, A. D. 1302. But allowing for a small latitude of difference, it may be observed, that they all conclude this period, within the thirty last years of the seventeenth century; i. e. they fix the termination of the second woe (Rev. xi. 14.) in the termination of the seventeenth century.

If this statement is granted, the con-

* See Dr. Pearcy's Key to the New Testament, and Mr. Whiston on Rev. ix.

sequence seems to be, that all the intervening predictions from ch. x. 1. to ch. xi. 14. relate to events preceding the eighteenth century, and that of course the seventh trumpet has long ago sounded, and the vials contained in it, begun to be poured out;* for the seventh trumpet quickly follows the termination of the sixth. The fall of the tenth part of the city must have taken place about the end of the said war, and the resurrection of the witnesses have been accomplished.

This view of the subject is confirmed by all the historians of Turkish affairs, and particularly by Mr. Eaton, who points out that the siege of Vienna, in 1683, was the last successful campaign of the Turks; and Sir Paul Ricaut shews most clearly, that before the year 1698, the Turks ceased to be a woe to Christendom; as is manifest from the following passage in vol. iii. p. 328. "This year, (1689) begins with the surrender of the strong city of Sighet, to the clemency of his Imperial Majesty, not being subdued by arms, but by famine. In the mean time the Turkish ambassadors pressed with much importunity to be admitted into audience, that they might deliver the credentials, and execute the commands of their master; but the imperial ministers were not, it seems, so much in haste, intending first to deliberate in what manner they were to be received, and what answers were to be given to their submissive requests for peace; a matter unknown before to the Turks, who, since the beginning of their empire had never before been acquainted with the manner of supplicating for peace. But the fortune of the world being now changed, and the game running high in the Emperor's hand, expedients were contrived rather to return a plausible case of denial, and a justifiable ground for continuing a war, than how to form and project advantageous articles for a peace." Again, p. 557, he adds, "The successes which the Christians had gained over the Turks, in all places, through the whole course of this year, 1697, put them into a kind of despair of being

any more victorious, but rather to yield to the hand of God, and to fix a period to the limits of their empire, which they believed, by the Providence of God, was no farther to be extended."

You will highly oblige the author of these remarks, by inserting them in your excellent work, and by setting him right in a point which appears to him of no little importance.

JUVENIS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

I HAVE lately been engaged in a perusal of the works of that admirable theologian and philosopher, the late Rev. William Jones; whose praise is in all the Churches, for the eminent services which he has performed in the cause of Christianity. I had read many of his pieces in their detached form, at different times, during the author's life, and had deposited them on the shelf of my library; where, whenever they caught my eye, they always excited pleasure in my mind. And having lately become a possessor of the uniform edition, printed since the author's death, I have set myself to read it, and have found great satisfaction and improvement in the employment.

My approbation, however, of these excellent productions of his masterly pen, is at times mingled with regret. Nothing human is perfect; no water, but that which flows from the living fountain, is absolutely pure. It appears to me, that the truth of this remark is exemplified in some parts of Mr. Jones's writings. Here and there a sentiment occurs which perplexes and grieves me; and the more highly I estimate the general plan and design of his compositions, the more I lament any erroneous mixture which they seem to contain. While I make these remarks, I am conscious of my own ignorance, and desirous of having my judgment rectified if it has erred; and therefore propose to state a point on which I differ from my favourite author, that some one of your correspondents may shed such light on the subject, as may remove the embarrassment of my mind.

I do not quarrel with Mr. Jones on

* See Mr. Faber's Sermon on the Seven Vials.

account of his Hutchinsonianism; for I am myself strongly attached to the views which bear that opprobrious name. I feel no objection to his zeal, in support of the Church of England; for I am myself a decided Episcopalian, and a cordial friend both to the doctrine and discipline of the Establishment. It is on topics which have no necessary connection with either of these things, that I doubt the propriety of Mr. Jones's statement.

The object to which I would now call the attention of your readers, for the purpose of obtaining farther information, is this writer's doctrine of baptism. This he frequently states; and that I may do justice to his opinion, I give it in his own words, vol. vi. p. 424. "There is then a new birth of the *spirit*; but as *water* is mentioned with it, it must mean the new birth in Christian baptism. There is also a *regeneration* spoken of by St. Paul; but as it is called the *washing* of regeneration, this also must refer to the water of baptism. The Church of England follows this doctrine of the Scripture, and understands regeneration as the gift of God in baptism: for this is the language of the Church in the office:—*We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit.* Regeneration, therefore, is the work of the Holy Spirit in baptism: and neither the Scripture nor the Church give us any encouragement to believe, that Christians are ever baptized by the hearing of a sermon," &c.

Now if I have not misconstrued this, and other like passages, in Mr. Jones's works, it is his doctrine that the outward visible sign and the inward spiritual grace of baptism are so linked together by the divine constitution, that they are never separated; inasmuch that every person who is duly baptized, according to the order of our Church, is also regenerated; and that the grace of regeneration is never bestowed but at the time, by the mean of baptism. If this be his meaning (and I believe I have not misstated it) I own that I have considerable objections to it.

If it had been stated that the inward and spiritual grace, of which water is

an outward and visible sign, does oftentimes attend the administration of the rite; or that the prayers of a godly minister, and believing parents and sponsors, are always answered, according to the divine promise, by a communication of the grace which is then implored, I should have started no objection. But it must be granted that (however contrary to the design of the Church service, which is truly spiritual both in its object and forms) the ceremony *may* occasionally be performed, when neither minister, parents, sponsors, nor its subject, have any conception of its design, or any desire after the blessing which it is intended to convey.

Now if a reception of baptism, that is, of the outward and visible sign, necessarily is accompanied with the inward and spiritual grace; then every baptized person is, at the time immediately subsequent to his baptism, a genuine Christian, a man "in Christ;" and *if any man be in Christ he is a new creature*. But to believe that many baptized persons, both children and adults, are *new creatures*, who never, from the earliest dawn of reason to their dying hour, discover one symptom of a new and spiritual life imparted to them, requires as much credulity of mind as to believe that a consecrated wafer is turned into flesh, and wine into blood, by ministerial benediction. How can it be said of the adult partaker of baptism, who comes to that ordinance on merely worldly motives, and for merely worldly ends (as I have known some persons to have done) and who before lived in the habitual practice of open sin, and continues afterwards in the same habitual practice of open sin, that in him *old things are passed away, and all things are become new*? Yet this is predicable of every one who is a *new creature*, and every regenerate person is a *new creature*.

Again: can a man be a *new creature*, without being *in Christ*, or a Christian? Assuredly not; because faith, according to the Scriptures, being the link of union between Christ and the soul, is the influential principle which produces that change of heart and life, which is described by the phrase—

Now faith often, (if not always, where sincere adult professors were concerned) preceded baptism in the Primitive Church; as, for instance, it was the ground on which Philip admitted the Eunuch to baptism. But if that *faith*, which is *of the operation of God*, invariably *worketh by love*, as our 12th article teaches, then it cannot precede regeneration; but must either be coeval with it, or subsequent to it; and, therefore, regeneration may precede baptism, though the latter is absolutely necessary, whenever it can be obtained, for admission to the privileges of the Christian Church, and as a mean of increasing that grace which had been before received. If regeneration, or a new birth, be essential to spiritual life; and if faith be a symptom of that life: then was the Ethiopian Eunuch regenerated before he was baptized. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, *is born of God*." 1 John v. 1.

Another, and in my opinion an unanswerable argument, may be drawn from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to prove that divine regeneration doth not always accompany the reception of baptism. For if *strengthening and refreshing* grace be not derived from the celebration of the Eucharist, and a participation of the consecrated elements, unless they be received in faith; i. e. if the inward and spiritual grace in one sacrament depend on the partaker's previous state of the soul; must it not of all necessity be maintained, that the same takes place in the other also? Otherwise, such a representation of the infallibly regenerating effect of baptism gives to that sacrament a superiority to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which no authority, human or divine, has attributed thereto. For neither has our Church asserted, nor will any Divine in our Church maintain, that he who partakes of the consecrated bread and wine unworthily, eateth the flesh and drinketh the blood of the Son of God.

Besides all this, is it not maintained by the advocates for infant baptism, as one of the main pillars of their fabric, that baptism was substituted by the divine authority of our Saviour, in the

place of circumcision, and that the same effects flowed from the latter under the Law, as are derived from the former under the Gospel. Now if this be admitted, it will follow that, as the rite of circumcision was in use till it was superseded by a change of the dispensation, those Jewish converts, who were both circumcised and baptized, were partakers of a double regeneration, if the outward and visible sign was always accompanied by the inward and spiritual grace. But a twofold regeneration is an absurdity which needs no explanation.

Mr. Jones (p. 225 of the same volume,) says, "The receiving of the Holy Ghost, so far as this is the effect of preaching, is different from what is done at baptism, and is not what is meant by regeneration or the new birth. If it can be shewn, that the Gospel any where promises a new birth, independent of baptism, we will believe it: but as the Church could never find it, we never shall; and they that teach it, and say there is experience for it, have no warrant from Scripture." Now, though I do not recollect any passage in which a new birth is *promised* independent of baptism, several texts may be produced in which it is spoken of without any reference to baptism, and positively ascribed to the instrumentality, not of baptism, but of the word of God. Such is the representation of St. Peter, 1 Ep. i. 23. "Being *born again*, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the word of God*, which liveth and abideth for ever;" where the preposition *δια*, governing a genitive case, denotes the medium or instrument through which the effect is produced, as in Luke i. 70. John i. 7. &c. Another decisive passage is James i. 18. "Of his own will *begat* he us *with (δια) the word of truth*." (See also 1 Cor. iv. 15. 1 John iii. 9. and v. 1, 18.) Can any texts be produced in which regeneration is ascribed, with equal precision, to the instrumentality of baptism?—I know of none.—To the same purpose good Bishop Latimer, who may well be supposed to have understood the doctrine of the Reformers, being himself one of them, speaks in his sermon on "the para-

ble of a king that married his son ;" in which he commends the office of preaching, and says, "It is God's instrument whereby he worketh faith in our hearts. Our Saviour saith to Nicodemus, *except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* But how cometh this regeneration? By hearing and believing of the word of God: for so saith St. Peter, *we are born anew, not of mortal seed, but of immortal by the word of God.*"

I am aware that the early writers of the Christian Church, to whose opinions a very high deference is due, use the words baptism and regeneration as synonymous terms;* and that the Reformers of the Church of England have followed their example. But may not this be accounted for by considering that judgment of charity respecting all professors of religion, which is justified by the inspired writers, who address all the members of a church as saints, elect, called, &c.; even while the epistle to which the address is prefixed, shews, that there were many unsanctified persons within the pale of that very Church? And may not the adoption of the term, by which the inward and spiritual grace is described as a substitution for that which expresses the outward and visible sign, be justified by Scripture usage; since (as Mr. Hart observes in his excellent letter on Dr. Gill's reasons for separating from the Church of England†) "the Holy Scriptures, as well as profane authors in all ages and languages, have done the same thing. It appears from the first chapter of Leviticus, that if an Israelite presented a burnt-offering to the Lord, conformably to the rules prescribed, *it was accepted for him* (ver. 4.) *to make an atonement for him.*" The sacrificed animal was only an emblem, which "pointed to the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. John i. 29. Yet to the type is attributed that expiatory effect, which can be true only of the antitype. *All flesh is grass,*

Isaiah xl. 6. (i. e.) it resembles grass in some of its attributes. *This bread is my body,* (i. e.) the symbol or representative of it. *That rock was Christ,* 1 Cor. x. 4; not literally, but emblematically, &c."

I should suppose, that if any *apparent* discrepancy should exist between the Common Prayer and the Articles of our Church, the latter should, on many accounts, be referred to as the standard of her doctrine. Now the 27th article appears to me inconsistent with the notion, concerning which I have been expressing my doubts. Let the reader judge for himself. "Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened; but it is also a *sign* of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that *receive baptism rightly* are grafted into the Church. The promises of the forgiveness of sin, of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are *visibly signed and sealed, faith is confirmed, and grace is increased, by virtue of prayer to God.*" Now repentance and faith, which are effects of the new birth, (for whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God) are required by our church to a right reception of baptism. And it is to be observed, that the article, so far from making regeneration the necessary effect of baptism, supposes regeneration to precede it; for it says, that by this rite duly performed "grace is *increased*," implying its antecedent communication: and a man must be born before he can perform the functions of a man; spiritual life must be kindled before it can be capable of an increase.

If any one of your readers should kindly undertake to diffuse some farther light on this important subject, either by confuting my mistakes and rectifying my errors, or by confirming my views; I would request him to peruse what Bishop Burnet has written on it in his Exposition of articles 25 and 27: what Archbishop Usher has said in his Body of Divinity (p. 415, third edition. 1649); and particularly Dr. Thomas Bray's Exposition of the second answer in the Church Catechism, in his "Catechetical Lectures." I would have tran-

* See Wall's History of Infant Baptism.

† This valuable tract, of which we understand that the London booksellers, Rivington, &c. have received a fresh supply, is, indeed, worthy of our warmest recommendation.

scribed some passages from these authors, if I had not been afraid of occupying too much room in your valuable miscellany.

JAMES.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

THE clergyman of my parish lately preached a sermon from these words, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God;" in the course of which he traced, with great precision, various deceptions which men are apt to practise, in order to conceal from themselves their want of real religion; and proved, as I thought very satisfactorily, that conformity to the revealed will of God is the only admissible evidence of a state of acceptance. I went home deeply affected by many of the preacher's remarks, and disposed to bless God for the advantages I enjoyed in having a pastor, who, while he exemplified in his own life the genuine spirit of Christianity, was so faithful in reproving the errors and rectifying the mistakes of his congregation. Some friends, however, who had also heard the sermon, and to whom I communicated my opinion of it, I found to be of a very contrary way of thinking. They disapproved of it as a *legal* discourse. This diversity of sentiment introduced an amicable discussion as to what was fairly implied in the term "preaching Christ." My friends, who, I must confess, were all of one mind, and consequently left me in a very small minority, contended that "preaching Christ," principally, if not exclusively, respected the display of God's mercy to a lost world, while I was disposed to maintain that it included also the awful denunciations of God's wrath against the impenitent. In support of my own views, I produced a folio volume which stood in the lower shelf of my bookcase, and read to them the following passage, which I had heard my good old father greatly commend for its sound sense, and the margin of which I had been led, by that circumstance, very conspicuously to mark with my pencil.

"Some men say, that it is preaching

Christ, and setting forth God's love, that will win sinners the best, and that terrors do but make unwilling hypocritical professors. This makes me remember how I have heard some preachers of these times, blame their brethren for not preaching Christ to their people, when they preached the danger of rejecting Christ, disobeying him, and resisting his spirit. Do these men think that it is no preaching Christ (when we have for many years told them the fullness of his satisfaction, the freeness and general extent of his covenant or promise, and the riches of his grace, and the incomprehensibleness of his glory, and the truth of all) to tell them afterwards the danger of refusing, neglecting, and disobeying him? and of living after the flesh, and preferring the world before him? and serving Mammon, and falling off in persecution, and avoiding the cross, and yielding in temptation, and quenching the spirit, and declining from their first love, and not improving their talents, and not forgiving and loving their brethren, yea, and enemies, &c.? Is none of this the Gospel? nor preaching Christ? Yea, is not repentance itself (except despairing repentance) proper to the Gospel, seeing the law excludeth it and all manner of hope. Blame me not, reader, if I be zealous against these men, that not only know no better what preaching Christ is, but in their ignorance reproach their brethren for not preaching Christ, and withal condemn Christ himself and all his Apostles? Do they think that Christ himself knew not what it was to preach Christ? or that he has set us a pattern too low for our imitation? I desire them soberly to read Matt. v. vi. vii. x. xxv. Rom. viii. 4. from the first verse to the fourteenth Rom. ii. Heb. ii. and iv. and v. and x. and then tell me whether we preach as Christ and his Apostles did.

"I say, we do set forth God's love, and the fullness of Christ, and the sufficiency of his death and satisfaction for all, and the freeness and extent of his offer and promises of mercy, and his readiness to welcome returning sinners: this we do first, mixing with this the discovery of their natural misery by sin, which must be first known, and next

we shew them the danger of neglecting Christ and his offer. 2. When we find men settled under the preaching of free grace, in a loose contempt or sleepy neglect of it, preferring the world and their carnal pleasures and ease, and the indulgence of their evil tempers, before the glory of heaven, and the riches of Christ and grace, is it not time for us to say, 'How shall ye escape if ye neglect so great salvation? And, of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, that treadeth under foot the blood of the covenant, &c.' Doth any of the Apostles speak more of hell-fire, and the worm that never dieth, and the fire that never is quenched, than Christ himself doth? Alas! what work should we make, if we should stroke and smooth all men with antinomian language? It were the way to please all the careless, sensual, ignorant multitude, but it is wide of Christ's way to save their souls. I am ready to think that these men would have Christ preached, as the papists would have him prayed to, who say Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, a number of times together, and call this praying to him: so to have the name of Jesus Christ often in the preacher's mouth, some people think is rightly to preach Christ."

This passage, however, by no means terminated the discussion. My friends still retained their own views, and I was unwilling, though I found myself by no means a match for them in argumentation, to give up hastily an opinion which I thought scriptural; and which was sanctioned by one, whose discriminating judgment and cheerful unaffected piety are still the subjects of many a pleasing recollection. I have resolved, therefore, to submit the whole affair to you, in the hope that, should you think proper to insert my letter in your miscellany, some one of your numerous correspondents, who has maturely considered the point, will inform me what it is *to preach Christ*.

Br——l.

N N.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

THERE is an expression, not uncom-

mon among religious people, which has, I think, been greatly misunderstood, or misapplied, viz. the *Leadings of Providence*. I have heard this question proposed, "How may we discern the Leadings of Providence?" I beg leave to offer a few thoughts on the subject.

The meaning of such a question I should suppose to be this—How may we know, in cases of doubt and difficulty, the way which God seems to point out? In answer to such an inquiry it may be observed, in the first place, that we can never safely conclude that God points out this or that way, because it is *easier* than any other. However God may be pleased, on some occasions, to make the way of his people plain before them, we have no grounds to believe that he *generally* leads them in that way, which, in the common sense of the word, is *easy*; on the contrary, many scriptures intimate that he leads them in difficult paths, to humble them, and to prove them, and to shew them what is in their heart. If the ease, with which a thing may be accomplished, is to be considered as a providential intimation of God's will, we may often justify wickedness. Hazael knew from the Lord, that he was to be king of Syria in his master's room, (2 Kings viii 13.) His master's situation at that time was such, that he could, with ease and secrecy despatch him: accordingly he did so (ver. 15); but no one will be so absurd or wicked as to say, that the convenient opportunity which he had of doing this was a divine intimation that he should commit the act. On the other hand, David had a promise from God that he should be king of Israel in the room of Saul, and was actually anointed by Samuel. Under these circumstances he once found Saul, in a defenceless state, in a cave; he could with all ease have slain him, and a way would thus have been open for his accession to the throne. Abishai, who attended him, pronounced it a providential call: "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day." But David thought otherwise: he had more knowledge of his duty

than Abishai had, and therefore would not put forth his hand to hurt the Lord's anointed.

Secondly—It is equally unsafe to judge of the will of God, from *strong impressions* upon the mind. Many well-disposed persons place an undue and dangerous confidence in these. It would, perhaps, be going too far to deny, that God has ever communicated his will to holy men in this manner; but it is certainly of great importance to remember, that impressions may come from a bad, as well as from a good, quarter. Satan often infuses sudden thoughts into the mind; and, more effectually to gain his purpose, transforms himself into an angel of light. All impressions, therefore, should be brought to the touchstone of God's word: they should be jealously examined, and scrupulously tried by the only rule of duty, and no further attended to than as they agree with that rule, which they assuredly will, if they come from God. He will never impress any thing on our minds which is contradictory to his own words.

The same observations may be applied to *dreams*. I know that many religious persons have a propensity to be led by them. No doubt the will of God has been, on many occasions, revealed to his servants in this way; but dreams may be traced to various sources; some may be from God, others we can scarcely doubt, from their nature and tendency, are from wicked spirits; but, in general, we may presume that a dream cometh from the multitude of business." Now when a man is perplexed about any matter, nothing can be more natural than that, having his thoughts much employed on the subject by day, he should dream about it in the night, and dream too that he adopted some particular mode of conduct; but it would be very absurd to infer, that *that* mode of conduct *ought* to be adopted. The utmost which can fairly be allowed is, that the hint should be duly weighed, and tried in the same way as impressions, by the only rule of duty—the word of God.

With regard both to impressions

and dreams it may, I think, be justly observed, that if ever the will of God has been signified in these ways, the occasions have been extraordinary, and we have thence no warrant to expect intimations of the same kind. Besides, having now a complete volume of God's revealed will, we have no right to look for direction, in the path of duty, to any other quarter; and even in seeking it there, a caution may not be unseasonable. Some well-meaning Christians are apt to judge of the will of God, or what they term the Leadings of Providence, in any matter, from particular passages of Scripture, which present themselves on opening the Bible for the purpose. Such conduct, however, savours of enthusiasm, and is not unlike tempting God.

After all these observations, it will be said, no direct answer has been given to the question. How may we judge of the Leadings of Providence? By way of answer to the inquiry, I would suggest the following hints, each of which might be considerably enlarged upon.

1. It is a great thing to be in the habit of holy and humble intercourse and communion with God; those who are so, will not be permitted greatly to err. "In *all* thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

2. An enlarged acquaintance with the word of God will be peculiarly helpful in cases of doubt and perplexity. That word contains sufficient rules and directions for every part of our conduct in life; and those who are conversant in it, and study it with humility and prayer, will be able to select such instructions as are adapted to their particular circumstances. The word of Christ, therefore, should dwell in us richly.

3. Prayer to God, on the subject of the particular difficulty, may be properly recommended. God has encouraged us to come to the throne of grace, in order to obtain grace to help in *every* time of need. Whenever, therefore, the understanding is unable clearly to discern the path of duty. (abstracted from which no Leadings of Providence are to be supposed) we

should with humble boldness intreat the Almighty's blessing on the use of our reasoning powers, in investigating the directions of his written word. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God."

4. It is of very great importance to have acquired a habit of Christian self-denial: if we are defective here, our judgments may be easily warped; and many, it is to be feared, thus err: under the idea of following the Leadings of Providence, they hastily take the way of ease or inclination, instead of seriously and deliberately studying the rule of duty.

Lastly, Let me recommend patient waiting upon God as indispensably necessary; but to this we are, in general, exceedingly averse: when our minds are set upon a thing, our time is always ready; hence we are apt to go before our guide. "Tarry thou the Lord's leisure," is needful counsel. The great secret, indeed, respecting this subject, seems to be, "Wait on the Lord, and keep his way." V. H.

For the Christian Observer.

SIR,

If there be any weight in the reasoning which I have adopted in my former papers, then it will follow, that the doctrine of episcopacy is a scriptural doctrine. I will therefore close the subject with these reflections.

1. The force of my remarks being admitted, some material difficulties in the history of the church will be obliterated. Even Mr. Gibbon, who cannot be suspected of partiality in favour of the christian priesthood, has this observation:—"After we have passed the *difficulties* of the first century, we find the episcopal government universally established, till it was interrupted by the republican genius of the Swiss and German reformers."* This remark is evidently founded on the supposition, that episcopacy receives no countenance from the New Testament. But admit this last position, and a greater difficulty will arise, against which Mr. Gibbon has made no provision. Who introduced the episcopal

* Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, vol. ii. p. 832. note, 8vo. edition.

government into the church, which, at the end of the first century, was universally established? Many of the Apostles lived till more than one half of that century was completed. Every person who brought forward new opinions, however absurd those opinions might be, *is marked*, and his name is handed down to posterity. But if episcopacy was not established by the Apostles, the man who was the first author of this amazing change in the government of the church, has escaped the notice of history. Is this credible? Allow only a reasonable weight to the observations which I have before made, and the whole difficulty vanishes in a moment.

2. The apostolical origin of episcopacy being admitted, the great question is, not whether the Christian church can subsist without this order, any more than whether it can subsist without spiritual worship; but whether I am justified in rejecting the order, which is clearly apostolical, and more especially when I find this order established in my native country? If I am asked what I think of those foreign Protestants, who have cast off the episcopal government, I answer, *nothing*. To their own master they stand or fall. The question itself appears irrelevant. It becomes not me to decide respecting the state of others; but with humility and in the fear of God, to follow the steps of the Apostles, as they followed their master. Neither sound doctrine, nor spiritual worship, nor apostolical government, is wanting in the united Church of England and Ireland. It cannot, therefore, be difficult, in my own case, to discover the path of duty.

3. In a country where such a church is established, if there be any truth in my former papers, it will be easy to see what degree of importance attaches to the numerous ordinations of certain classes of Dissenters, which we see advertised in the public prints, where one prays, and another exhorts and another sings, and where all are equal. These things derive a consequence from the air with which they are brought forward; but it is sufficient to say, that nothing similar appears in any part of the New Testament.

WAYRING.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

In addition to my observations in a preceding number on coroners' certificates, I send you for insertion (if you think it proper) exact copies of certificates, which I have very lately received along with funerals brought to my own church. The former is from the coroner of the county in which I reside, and is as follows:

County of } "To the Curate of ****, in the
**** } said County.

"These are in the name of our Sovereign Lord the King, to require you, on the receipt hereof, to give christian burial to the body of R— H—, upon whom the inquisition of me, the undersigned coroner, hath this day been had. Whereby it is found, that the said deceased came to his death by a certain quantity of earth and stones falling upon him when in a coal-pit, and that without any felonious circumstances attending the same; and for your acting herein this shall be to you sufficient warrant and authority. Given under my hand and seal the 25th day of October, in the year of our Lord 1802.

*** ***, Coroner."

This certificate would have run in the same form and words, if the subject of it had died by his own hands, and the jury had given a verdict of lunacy.

The latter is from the coroner of a county which borders on my parish, and is as follows:

**** } "To the Minister and Church-
to wit } wardens of the Parish of ****, in
the said county, and to all others whom it may
concern.

"Whereas I, with my inquest, the day and year hereunder written, have taken a view of the body of J— H—, who was accidentally killed, and now lies dead in your parish, and have proceeded therein according to law. These are, therefore, to certify, that you may lawfully permit his body to be buried; and for your so doing this is your warrant. Given under my hand and seal this 16th day of August, 1802.

**** ***, Coroner."

It would afford some relief to me, and perhaps to many other clergymen, if you, or some of your intelligent correspondents, could give a satisfactory answer to the following queries, viz.

1. What is the reason of so remarkable a difference in the certificates of the coroners of different counties?

2. Upon what law does any coroner ground his authority of laying his man-

date on a clergyman in his majesty's name?

3. In the performance of ministerial duties, has a clergyman any rules to govern himself by, except the rubrics in the common prayer book, or if there is a doubt about the meaning of any rubric, the direction of his ecclesiastical superiors?

4. Is a clergyman under any obligation to use the burial service over the corpse of a person who has destroyed his own life, because the jury have pronounced a verdict of insanity; which is almost always the case in this age of stupid inconsideration? Burn, in his Ecclesiastical Law, gives it as his opinion, that in such cases the service ought to be used. But it is certain the rubric (which is confirmed by statute) very wisely makes no such distinction; and Burn, I think, gives no reason for his sentiment, except his own imagination, which no one will be inclined to take for law.

We have received the following communication from a correspondent, on whose fidelity and accuracy we place such implicit reliance, that we have no hesitation in vouching for the truth of the narrative.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

My situation as a minister of a parish, in a part of the kingdom where a great many soldiers have been successively quartered during the late war, has afforded me much opportunity of observing and inquiring into the state of religion amongst that class of men. Although, for the most part, the character and conduct of the military presents a picture of impiety and licentiousness, from which the mind of the serious Christian turns with mingled abhorrence and pity, yet I feel much satisfaction in being able to bear testimony to several instances of genuine piety, even under all the difficulties and disadvantages which are attached to the life and habits of the soldier. I have spent many hours, in the course of the last five years, in very profitable and edifying communication with men of

this description, who have withstood the temptations and opposition which the present state of the military calling presents; and who have unremittingly persevered in the profession and practice of religion, notwithstanding the influence and persuasion of evil companions, nay, too often the threats and persecution of their officers. The trials to which those, who are more than usually concerned for the welfare of their souls, are exposed to from the ill-will and derision of the world, is well known, but few, if any, are placed under more trying circumstances than the religious soldier. The hatred, scorn, and persecution, which he generally meets with, is far greater than that which usually falls to the lot of religious people of the lower classes, who are placed in other situations of life.

Shortly after the return of the Duke of York from Holland, one of the regiments, which had suffered very materially in the different engagements, was quartered in my parish. A private soldier called upon me one evening after divine service, with a request that I would explain a particular part of my discourse, which he had just heard, expressing, at the same time, much interest in the general subject of it. I found him to be a very well-informed man, of distinguished piety, and much religious knowledge. His language and address betrayed evident marks of strong natural sense, aided by an unusual acquaintance with the word of God, and the operations of his grace upon the heart.

From this man I received a most interesting detail of circumstances which occurred during the campaign in Holland, including a particular account of the temper and behaviour of many individuals before and during the heat of battle. Such anecdotes, from a sensible and pious man, I consider as very valuable; for although we are at no loss in obtaining minute details of military operations from various quarters, both public and private, yet the *religious* history of a battle is one not always to be procured. I may possibly take some future opportunity of communicating to you this good man's remarks on the state of his comrades during

that awful suspense between life and death which a battle occasions.

He frequently called upon me during the continuance of the regiment in my neighbourhood, and every succeeding interview gave me fresh proofs of his religious attainments. At that time he was the only man in the regiment who made any profession of religion, and on that account was ridiculed and despised by the greater part of his companions.

At length the regiment having nearly repaired, by fresh recruits, the loss sustained in Holland, was ordered to join a camp then forming, for the purpose of collecting troops for the Egyptian expedition, under the command of Sir Ralph Abercrombie. A few days before their departure, W——, for that was his name, brought with him another private of the same regiment, who had expressed a particular desire to speak with me, but of whom he knew very little, except that in some of the engagements in Holland he had been observed voluntarily to seek danger, and needlessly to hazard his person, as if with a desperate resolution of ridding himself of life. On being introduced to me alone, the stranger said, that he hoped I should excuse the liberty he had taken of coming to request that I would purchase a small parcel which he had brought, in order to enable him to supply himself with a few necessities preparatory to his voyage to Egypt, as he had no other means of raising a little money. He was a tall young man, of a dark sun-burnt countenance, having something in his aspect, speech, and address, which struck me as being above his present appearance. On opening his parcel, which he did not do without some confusion, it proved to consist of some clergyman's bands, one or two religious books, and some manuscript sermons. "Sir," said he, "you will hear with surprise, and I cannot mention it without some uneasiness, what I have for a long time concealed from every one around me, that I am in reality a brother clergyman, though now disguised in the habit of a common soldier. My father is a clergyman in Wales: he educated me

himself for the church, and procured me ordination, with a title to a curacy at —, in the county of W—: my name is E—. I continued upon that cure three years, during which time, I am sorry to say, through much imprudence and inattention to the decorum which suited my character, I contracted several debts which I had neither means nor prospect of paying. Fearing disgrace and imprisonment, and knowing my father's inability to assist me, I quitted the town, and formed the resolution of enlisting as a soldier, which I shortly afterwards did, and was soon sent on the expedition to Holland, whence I lately returned. That you may have no doubts as to the truth of my story, which may possibly induce you to sympathize with a brother clergyman in distress, I will shew you several letters and papers which, when you have read, I trust you will give me credit for the truth of my relation." He also wrote some sentences in my presence, which proved his handwriting to be the same with that of the manuscript sermons he had requested me to purchase. On examining the letters, (some of which were from his father, expostulating with him on his extravagance;) and putting a variety of questions to him, I felt fully satisfied as to the truth of his story.

I was greatly concerned at what he had related, and began to enter into a close and friendly expostulation with him on the inconsistency of his present situation with the sacred profession to which he was bound by ties the most indissoluble: I urged the duty of his endeavouring to return, if possible, to the discharge of his ministerial duties with a mind influenced and improved by the experience of past hardships and misfortunes. As he did not appear disposed to follow this advice, I brought forward, with much earnestness, every argument which Scripture or reason suggested to my mind on the subject, and begged that he would permit me to endeavour to procure his discharge from the army, by a representation of his case to the Duke of York. Although he spoke to me with much civility, and thanked me for my

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advice, and the offer I had made, yet I was sorry to perceive a great reluctance on his part to avail himself of my counsel, and but little appearance of remorse for what had past: he talked like a man weary of the world, who had no desire to continue in it, and no hope of sustaining a respectable character in it; it was plain that no impression of a religious kind had been made upon his mind. The peculiarity of his situation, and the occasion of his coming, led him, at the same time, to pay attention to what I said. I entered into a long conversation with him on the nature and design of Christianity in general, as well as of the pastoral office in particular, examined him as to his views of the doctrines of the Gospel, and explained my own to him very fully: I entreated him to take what I had said in good part, and urged him, by every sacred consideration, to act the part which it appeared to me his duty and interest to adopt. He said but little in reply, and almost declined saying any more. I therefore purchased his little parcel, gave him a couple of books, and dismissed him with a blessing, once more entreating him to lay to heart what I had said. In two days the regiment went away, nor did I see either W—, or Mr. E— before their departure.

A circumstance of so singular a nature frequently occupied my thoughts afterwards, and whenever I wore the bands which I had purchased from Mr. E—, I felt an increased interest in his behalf. From that time, till the return of our troops from Egypt, I had no opportunity of hearing any thing respecting him, except that a clergyman of his name had certainly officiated at the town which he had specified, a few years since: this I learned from a native of the place.

In June last my old acquaintance W— called upon me, and said he was just arrived from Egypt, and had a great deal to say to me. With the same excellence of heart and head, as he had testified on every former occasion, he entered into a clear and satisfactory account of the events of the Egyptian expedition, describing, in a

very affecting manner, the outward hardships and dangers he had encountered, as well as the inward consolation and support which he had derived from the power of religion on his mind.

"I have now," continued he, "a story to relate which I am certain you will feel a deep concern in. You, without doubt, remember that young clergyman whom I brought to your house the year before last, the Reverend Mr. E——. At that time I knew very little of him; he, however, shortly after we had left you, observed, with some emotion, that what you said to him had made more impression upon his mind than any thing he had ever heard in the course of his life. He then made me also acquainted with his history, to which I was before a stranger. From that day I was confined in the hospital with a fever, and did not see him again before our departure for Egypt. We embarked on board of different ships; it was not, therefore, till our arrival at Malta that we met together. Mr. E—— took an immediate opportunity of saying, 'W——, I have long wished to see you, I want to tell you how greatly indebted I feel to that dear friend of yours at ——'. I can never forget him: his words made a deep impression on my heart, and I trust, by the blessing of God, they will yet make a still deeper."

I found on conversing with him, that since I saw him he had become affected with a deep sense of his spiritual danger, and by meditation and secret prayer during the voyage, had acquired much insight into religion. He shewed strong marks of penitence, and gave a favourable hope of an important change having taken place in his views and dispositions. I was always happy to find, on the reassembling of the regiment after the voyage, that among the recruits were a few very seriously disposed. Mr. E—— and myself soon formed a little religious society amongst them, which gradually increased to the number of twenty-four: we met as often as possible to read the Bible together, converse on the concerns of eternity, and unite in prayer to Almighty God for his blessing on our

endeavours. We derived much benefit from these meetings. Mr. E——, in particular, expressed himself highly delighted by such a profitable mode of passing those hours which in our line of life are too generally devoted to drinking, debauchery, and profaneness. In his confidential conversations with me, he frequently mentioned your name, and shewed me the substance of your friendly advice to him, which he had from memory committed to paper.

"When we arrived on the coast of Africa, Mr. E—— and myself were in the same boat at the time of our landing at Aboukir. Throughout the whole of the tremendous fire which, for a considerable time, the French artillery kept upon us, I observed great coolness and patient fortitude in his countenance. His deportment was very different from what I had seen when we served together in Holland. At that time he always appeared desperate and careless; now I thought I could perceive a courage blended with humility, which evidently proceeded from a much more exalted source. We both, by the mercy of God, escaped unhurt on that day. Our little society continued its meetings as regularly as the trying circumstances of our situation would permit. Mr. E—— was three or four times engaged with the enemy afterwards, and always behaved both before and during the battle with much steady, and I may call it, godly courage.

"On the evening preceding the 21st of March, our whole society met together. Mr. E—— said, in the presence of the rest, 'I cannot account for the strong impression which has seized my mind, that I shall not survive the event of to morrow's engagement: no such prepossession ever occupied my thoughts on any former occasion, I feel, therefore, strongly affected by this; but if it be thy will, O God, thy will be done!' We then united in prayer together for him, for ourselves, and for all our brethren in arms, beseeching God to prepare us for the awful trial, and give us grace either to meet death with joyful hope, or to receive his sparing mercy, if our lives should be preserved, with gratitude. Knowing the importance of the next day's battle, and

the little chance we stood of all meeting again in this world, we embraced each other with peculiar attachment, and mutual recommendation to the God of battle and the preserver of souls. Oh, Sir! it was a happy, but trying season to us; I saw Mr. E—— an hour before the horrors of that bloody day commenced; his words were, 'Pray earnestly for me, and if I am killed, and you should be spared, give my last blessing to our worthy and dear friend at ——; tell Mr. ——,' continued he, 'that I owe him more than worlds can repay: he first opened my heart to conviction, and God has blessed it to repentance: through the unspeakable mercies of Christ, I can die with comfort.'

"After the severe engagement which followed, wherein the brave Abercrombie fell, according to agreement, our little society met. Every life was spared except that of poor Mr. E——, whose head was taken off by a cannon ball at an early period of the action. Such was the will of God. Whilst, therefore, we returned hearty thanks for our preservation, we blessed God's goodness for sparing the life of our departed brother, till by a lively exercise of faith and repentance, as we had every reason to trust, God had made him his own. I now also bless God, that I have had this opportunity of seeing and relating to you a story, which I know you rejoice to hear."

Without farther comment, Mr. Editor, I send you the above relation, which I have committed to writing with as much faithfulness and accuracy as I am able.

L. R.

For the Christian Observer.

ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MEN FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR OPINIONS.

THE question under what circumstances men may be charged with the consequences of their opinions, is of great importance to the decision of many controversies, at least, to the determination what judgment we ought to form concerning them. The popular sentiment upon the subject, as most popular sentiments are, is at variance with itself. On the one hand, it is repre-

sented as a law of candour, not to charge another with any consequences of his opinions, which he chooses to disclaim. And this sentiment is recommended by the easy introduction which it procures for principles, which if attended with their apparent, perhaps their necessary consequences, would probably meet with some resistance. On the other hand, when men conceive themselves to have an interest in the degradation or destruction of any principles, they generally act as if they considered it lawful to charge their adversary with all the consequences, which, with the least shew of reason, can be deduced from his opinion. So flexible a rule cannot be just: and upon a subject of such importance, we stand in need of a guide upon which we can depend.

It must then be premised that the subject here to be discussed, is not the *necessary* consequences of opinions; for to call them necessary, is to beg the question, and to decide the matter at once. Neither are the consequences into which we now propose to inquire *apparent* only. For then nothing would remain but to detect the sophistry which unjustly deduces them. The present subject of inquiry is much larger and much more important. It comprises all those consequences which may be denominated *rational*. But as upon this term the whole of the ensuing reasoning will depend, it is necessary to explain with accuracy in what sense it is used. It is not then meant to describe a consequence which is rational *upon the whole*; for then there would be little difference between a rational and a necessary consequence. But it is intended to signify such a consequence as is deduced by the most legitimate ratiocination; *the particular principle alone being considered from which the consequence is derived*. In this sense, universal happiness is a consequence *rational* deducible from the divine goodness.

Now to determine in what cases men are chargeable with the rational consequences of their opinions, the *subject* of those opinions, or the *degree of knowledge* which we possess concerning it, must be considered. Upon the nature and extent of human knowledge,

the decision will entirely rest. Perfect ignorance and perfect knowledge are here, for obvious reasons, equally out of the question. But the intermediate space is vastly extended; and between the highest and the lowest degrees of human knowledge, there is a very considerable distance. For the purposes of the present argument, it will be sufficiently accurate to divide the province of human knowledge into two parts; the first of which comprehends those subjects which are beyond the reach of our faculties, and of which our knowledge is consequently imperfect; the second relates to those subjects, which may be represented as lying within the sphere of our comprehension, and concerning which we may attain a considerable degree of knowledge.

On subjects confessedly beyond the reach of human comprehension, we ought not to be made accountable for the consequences, which nevertheless, we cannot deny to be rationally deducible from our principles; unless the connection of the one with the other be matter of certain knowledge or of highly probable inference. And we are exempted from the necessity of admitting such consequences, and of being accountable for them, in all cases in which the degree of evidence derived to them from their original principle is over balanced by a greater degree of evidence arising from some other source. It was represented as a rational inference or consequence from the divine goodness, that universal happiness should prevail. It will be readily acknowledged, that of all subjects, the nature and operations of God, both from their sublimity and their magnitude, are the farthest removed from the comprehension of man. The information concerning this subject, which reason and revelation afford, is far from being perfect. The general knowledge, however, which we derive from these sources, is certain; and so likewise are many important particulars conveyed to us by the same means. Nevertheless, divine science is not systematically communicated. We do not behold it in all its relations and consequences. It resembles the information which we

receive from credible authority, of a foreign country; in which the operations of nature are so different from what passes under our own experience, that our inferences from the known to the unknown phenomena, are almost totally precarious. How far this is the case in divine subjects, will be apparent, when we consider that the rational consequence, from the divine goodness, of universal happiness, is directly contradicted by the most certain evidence of experience—by plain and palpable fact.

Not only the goodness, but the wisdom and power of the Divine Being, obliges us to infer the non-existence of evil. Nevertheless, in the portion of the universe with which we are concerned, we see evil, both moral and natural, abound. What then is our conduct? Do we deny the divine perfections? Do we give up the evidence of experience and our senses? No: we acknowledge both the one and the other; but we acknowledge them to be irreconcilable.* This is an instance full to the point. It establishes, in the most decisive manner, the position, that cases may exist, in which we are entitled to the privilege of holding the principle, and yet disclaiming the consequence. For in proportion as any case approaches to that which has been mentioned, so far is the same conduct admissible. Under this description, therefore, is obviously included the case of those, who consider themselves justified in uniting the belief of the absolute dependence of man upon divine grace, with that of such a degree of freedom in rational agents, as renders them responsible for their actions. Yet from these two principles may be derived by a process, the legitimacy of which cannot be disputed, consequences diametrically opposite to each other. For it is easy to perceive, that were it not for the controul which these two principles mutually exercise over each other, the natural conclusion from the first would be, that man is a mere

* The methods by which some have attempted to account for the origin of evil, reminds one of the opinion held by several eminent Mathematicians, that *nothing divided by nothing may produce something*.

machine, while by the second we should find ourselves obliged to ascribe to him an absolute independence upon his Maker. The divine prescience equally militates with the morality of human actions, and the morality of human actions with the divine prescience.

In these and in every similar case, we ought to consider the nature of the subject, and the limited capacity of the human mind; and the duties which we ought to learn from such considerations are, humility and charity. Could we submit to "know in part," the whole affair would be as intelligible as is necessary to our duty and happiness; nor should we indulge ourselves in an uncharitable opinion of those whose sentiments, although they may widely differ from our own, have nothing in them which is decidedly dishonourable to God, or hostile to religion and morality. Should they, however, come under this description, no mistaken notions of charity should deter us from opposing them with determination and zeal.

The reflections of an eminent prelate, upon the controversy existing in his time between the Lutherans and Calvinists, whose practice it was to charge each other with all the odious consequences, which could be deduced from their respective opinions, are distinguished by so much justice, and bear so immediately upon the present subject, that they well deserve to be brought forward. "He who believes," says the Bishop of Sarum, "that an ill consequence is justly drawn from any opinion, is in the right, when he is by that determined against it. But because he thinks he sees that the consequence is clear, and cannot be avoided; he ought not for that to judge so ill of those who hold the opinion, but declare at the same time that they abhor the consequence; that they prevaricate in that declaration; and that they both see the consequence and own it; though for decency's sake they disclaim it. He ought rather to think that either they do not see the consequence, but satisfy themselves with some of those distinctions with which it is avoided; or that though they do see it, yet they look on that only as an objection, which indeed

they cannot well answer."* These sentiments, with those which follow to the same purpose, are not indeed expressed with the precision requisite upon such a subject; but their general excellence can hardly be denied.

From those subjects, concerning which our defective knowledge excuses us from the necessity of being responsible for the consequences of our opinions, let us now proceed to those, which comparatively lying within the compass of our faculties, will not admit the same liberty.

And here it must be observed, as belonging to the class of consequences justly imputable, that when any person holds an opinion, with a professed denial annexed thereto of that opinion by the influence of which the consequences of the former are counteracted or controled, all the consequences rationally deducible from the opinion which he maintains are justly chargeable upon him. So, if one who holds the doctrine of predestination, denies all liberty in human actions, he cannot in justice escape the imputation, that he roots up the very foundations of morality and responsibility. The same may be said of the doctrine of the necessity of divine grace, when maintained with the same exclusive rigour. Nor are the advocates of human liberty, when they proceed to the same excess, less liable to the rational consequence of their doctrine, which represents man as his own Lord, or his own Saviour.

But there are other cases of responsibility for the consequences of our opinions, besides those in which we impose the necessity upon ourselves. In all those cases, in which the *connection* between the principle and the consequence under consideration is placed within the province of reason, and is declared by reason to be just, the consequence is justly chargeable, even though it may be disclaimed. But as

* See Exposition of the Articles, Preface, p. xvi. xvii; see, likewise, the Preface to *Siméon's Helps to Composition*, which breathes the same catholic, rational, and conciliating spirit. It may not be amiss, also, to attend to the manner in which St. Paul obviates the objected, and not irrational consequences of his doctrine. Rom. iii. 5, 8; vi. 1, 15; vii. 7.

the whole depends upon the certainty or the probability by which that connection is established, great caution should be used, lest by mistaking a presumptive, or merely plausible argument, for a certainty or probability, as is too commonly the case, we think ourselves at liberty to load an opponent with every opprobrious consequence, which can, by such means, be extorted from his opinions. The danger of mistake or abuse, however, does not invalidate the rule proposed; and it is a rule of great importance.

By this rule Cicero was justified in charging atheism upon the principles of Epicurus, though Epicurus did not admit the consequence.*

By the same rule we consider ourselves authorized to deny the claim of many writers, especially of modern times, who, from the general wreck of morals, which proceeds from the profligacy of their principles, would except particular virtues; either that they may more effectually recommend those principles, or throw a veil over their deformity.

On the ground that the connection in question is comprehended under the objects of human knowledge, we refuse to admit Voltaire as a theist; and with equal firmness we deny the pretensions of Middleton, of Priestley, and of Geddes, to the character of believers.

Finally; upon this principle it is, that we are supplied with a ready and a decisive reply to all those audacious propagators of opinions, in their tendency evidently destructive either of religion or social order, who may claim the privilege of not being pressed with the consequences of their tenets; and take sanctuary under that indulgent maxim of philosophical candour which allows them a security from the imputation of any consequences of their principles, however evident, and however dangerous, which they use the precaution formally to disavow.

There are cases, however, of a third description, which demand some consideration. They are properly *except-*

tions to that which has just been examined. They relate to such consequences as, although justly chargeable upon the principles from which they flow, yet, from a certain defect of understanding, extreme simplicity, inveterate prejudice, and other causes of a like nature, ought not to be urged upon the maintainers of those principles. They are, nevertheless, equally chargeable upon the principles, though not upon the persons holding them. They would be chargeable upon the persons, if these persons were sensible the consequences in question were necessarily deducible from their opinions. And this *may* be the case, although the consequences may be protested against with much earnestness and solemnity. The exception, however, here made, is absolutely necessary, unless we would contract the mercy of God, without authority.

It is upon this ground that Hooker, in his laboured discourse of Justification, defends the position of which he did not doubt, that "God was merciful to save thousands of our fathers living in popish superstitions, inasmuch as they sinned ignorantly,"* and denied the foundation, not directly, but by consequent.† Consequences being either immediate and evident, or remote and obscure, there remained a charitable hope that their error, being consequential only, might not operate to the exclusion of juster principles, nor deprive them of the mercy of God. J. M.

[The subject discussed by J. M. is one which does not seem to have been carefully weighed by Dr. Kipling, and some other late writers. We therefore recommend to their calm and attentive perusal the above able and judicious disquisition.]

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

IN your Number for October, your truly respectable correspondent, Onatrama, after some preliminary observations on the use of the term *Co-operation*, as applied to the joint agency of

* Verbis reliquisse deos, re sustulisse. De Nat. Deor. l. i. § 85; see again the same book, § 121, and 123.

* § 9.

† Throughout the Discourse.

God and man in the work of salvation, concludes that it ought to be laid aside as incorrect and unsafe. To the term itself I have no attachment, and perhaps may never have employed it; yet I confess that I do not see any adequate cause for its proscription.

Let me in the first place, advert to the objections of your correspondent.

The use of the term is stated to be "incorrect." Why? Because "God and man do not work together in the same act, or in the same sort of act;" and because "the work of God, and the work of man, are not coincident as to time." But does the established use of the word, in other instances, require such an union of particulars? When we say that our governors at home, and our fleets and armies abroad, co-operated during the late war, in the preservation of the country, is this language deemed incorrect? I need not accumulate similar examples. On the principle under consideration, unity of place, and a concurrence in a degree of exertion, and in various other circumstances, might equally be declared indispensable to justify, in any case, the use of the word Co-operation.

Farther: the term is averred to be unsafe. Why? Because "it tends to mislead the ignorant, and to offend the discerning." I conceive, Sir, that this kind of general reasoning would apply to every theological expression. There is not one which may not be misapplied, and thus mislead the ignorant. As to the offence given to the discerning; if we take offence at the warrantable use of a word, we are defective either in discernment, or in something still more estimable.

I would finally observe, with reference both to the alleged incorrectness and danger in question, that refinement is not duly cautious when it discards a term employed, in the very sense which is obnoxious, by the inspired penmen of the New Testament. Turn to the last verse of the Gospel of St. Mark,

and to the first verse of the sixth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (see also ch. v. verse 20;) and you will have too distinct examples of the term co-operation applied to the joint agency of God and man, in the work of human salvation. The original verb, in each instance, (*συνεργῶ*) is literally and accurately rendered by our English word co-operate.

But it is chiefly, Sir, for the sake of a general principle, that I trouble you with this letter. I wish pious men deeply to consider the importance of shunning every step, which is likely to stir up needless divisions and jealousies among Christians. Nothing makes or upholds a party like a word. The fastidious rejection of one phrase, or the affected use of another, is sufficient. Were the proscription of the term Co-operation, widely and avowedly adopted; numbers, destitute of Onatrama's candour, if they should hear the luckless word from the lips, or detect it in the writings of a brother, however innocent might be his meaning, would speedily set him down as half a heretic. I was pleased recently to observe, that, when speaking of the word *condition*, as applied to good works, you allowed the use of it, when the broad distinction was maintained between an *indispensable* and a *meritorious* condition. Yet such is the eagerness of party, that, if a sound divine denominates holiness a condition of salvation, not with the idea that man's holiness pays any part of the price of salvation, but meaning compendiously to express the scriptural truth, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord, he is in danger, I fear, of being treated by many as little better than a Socinian.

Let us employ theological terms accurately, and guard them by requisite explanations. But let us not indulge in ourselves, nor excite or countenance in others, a propensity to take needless offence.

K. R.

MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

THE enclosed poem has never been published. It was written six or seven years ago, when the progress of irreligion was somewhat more rapid than, I trust, it now is. A contempt of the sabbatical institution, however, still forms too prominent a part of the character of the present day. Should the following lines appear to you calculated to counteract the prevalence of that evil, you will perhaps afford them a place in your miscellany. P.

THE SUNDAY WATER PARTY.

In a village near town, on the banks of the Thames,
There liv'd a good couple, (I don't tell their names;)
This pair you must know, had a son they call'd Ned,
And he to the trade of a grocer was bred;
As good-humour'd a fellow as ever I knew,
And in honour and honesty equal'd by few.
At church he was constant, and always well drest,
And of all the psalm singers 'twas thought he sang best.
Ned's person was neat, and his manners polite,
So the shop was well-crowded from morning to night.
His master, who drew near the end of his life,
Had determined to give him his daughter to wife:
And Nancy was pretty and good, and 'tis said,
Had long look'd with an eye of affection on Ned.
About this time, it happen'd, some Jacobin folk
Form'd a club at the sign of King Charles in the Oak,
(I do firmly believe that most of them there,
Would have wish'd him, like Absalom, hung by the hair)
To drink and to smoke, and of politics prate,
And, tho' drunken themselves, to take care of the state;
For tho' times were so bad, and provisions so dear,
Their newspapers cost them six guineas a year.
Of this club a young fellow named Jack was the head,
A clerk to a lawyer, next neighbour to Ned;
For his wit and his humour admir'd and caress'd,
Tho' his morals and conduct were none of the best:
He was civil to Ned, and, whenever they met,

Tried to coax and to wheedle him into the set:
By what arts he prevail'd, 'twould be tedious to tell,
Suffice it to say, he succeeded too well.
Soon a wonderful change this new company made,
He neglected his church, and neglected his trade:
He quickly became a deep politician,
Swore the nation was in the high road to perdition;
Was eager to find out the faults of the throne,
The lords and the commons, but never his own.
He first learnt to omit, then to ridicule prayer,
To laugh at his Bible, to drink, and to swear.
So alter'd he was, you would scarce think it true,
'Twas the same honest good-humour'd Ned that you knew.
His master, in anger, declared they must part,
And Nancy's pale face told the grief of her heart.
His parents reprov'd him again and again,
But reproof and advice were repeated in vain;
At times his convictions and sorrow were deep,
But a song or a bumper laid conscience to sleep,
While the feelings of virtue still left were repress'd
By the dread of a laugh, or an infidel jest.
How many a soul has been ruin'd thro' fear,
A bravo tow'rs God, tho' afraid of a sneer!
The party were met on a Saturday night,
They had pretty well drunk, and their spirits were light,
When Jack thus harrangu'd them—"Before we must move,
I've a plan to propose, which I think you'll approve.
To-morrow is Sunday, a dull tiresome day,
When we're neither permitted to work or to play;
Yet trust me, I'll find you no bad recreation,
In spite of the law, or the King's proclamation:
For a trip on the water to Richmond I vote,
I'll treat you at dinner, and find you a boat;
As for you, who persist in frequenting the church.
Do for once leave the parson and clerk in the lurch."
The landlord, who was not of their way of thinking,
But had enter'd the club to encourage their drinking,
Cries, "I'm sorry, my friends, but to church I must go,
I daren't give offence to the vicar, you know."
"Your int'rest," quoth Jack, "is a reason for you,
It carries the vicar and bishop there too;

But in conscience I could not, in such kind of weather,
 Sit pent in a pew for whole hours together,
 To hear a long prosing from one who, the fact is,
 Will preach by the hour, what he never will practice.
 I don't blame the parson—he's paid for the day—
 But I think those are fools who hear without pay."
 Jack's speech was receiv'd with a gen'ral applause,
 His jokes were all wit, and his sentiments laws.
 The rest of the party agreed with delight,
 The plan was arrang'd, and they parted that night;
 In the morning betimes they assembled again,
 The boat was prepared, and they set sail at ten.
 The church-bell now summoned the parish to prayer,
 Ned heard, and he sigh'd, and he long'd to be there.
 Jack perceiv'd it, and cried, "What a pity it is,
 Thou wilt never get rid of that sanctified phiz;
 I see thou art troubled with one of thy qualms,
 So I'll sing you a song, Ned, instead of the psalms."
 Then he sang of the folly and madness of thinking,
 Of the pleasures of love, and the pleasures of drinking;
 That 'twas wisdom to cast away trouble and sorrow,
 To be merry to-day, and not think of to-morrow.
 "'Tis foolish," says Ned, "yet I cannot but say,
 I wish I were not of this party to-day.
 I am not very fond of the water, I own;
 On a Sunday, so often, I've accidents known.
 I was once superstitious, and fancied it then
 A judgment from God, and a warning to men."
 "Nay, prithee," quoth Jack, "make an end of such cant,
 I had rather by half hear a methodist rant.
 Don't you know that for all men these church-goers pray,
 Who travel by land or by water to-day?
 So we're pray'd for by Christians of every station,
 By the parson, the clerk, and the whole congregation:
 And if, after this any accident come,
 These saints might as well spend their sabbath at home.
 Ev'ry Sunday that's fine, I go the year round,
 And you see, master Ned, I have never been drown'd.
 But if sometimes it happen, why, tell me, I pray,
 Of all days in the year, it should happen to-day?"
 Christ. Observ. No. 12.

I will lend thee a book, that will prove thy fears vain;
 It must all be true, for 'twas written by Paine:
 'Twill convince thee, that hell and the devil are tools,
 Mere bugbears to terrify children and fools;
 That religion's a craft, and the Bible was made
 By parsons, to keep up the trick of the trade."
 He embellish'd his speech with many a curse
 With which I don't chuse to embellish my verse.
 A word by the by—when you hear a man swear,
 'Tis useful to make it a motive for prayer;
 Thank God that he taught you to rev'rence his name,
 And beg him to pardon the sin that you blame.
 To return to my tale—Ned, asham'd of his fear,
 Tried as merry and thoughtless as Jack to appear.
 The spring, just return'd, with new foliage was crown'd,
 And the landscape was lovely and blooming around;
 For Nature, like man, in her holyday vest,
 Seem'd to hail with delight a new Sabbath of rest.
 Inspir'd by such seasons, the Christian will raise
 His part in this general chorus of praise,
 And the wonders of nature will louder applaud,
 When he traces her steps to her Maker and God.
 But frigid and tasteless, the infidel's mind
 Is not form'd to partake in a joy so refined;
 Tho' his idol is nature, her power is unknown,
 The blind worshipper bows to a stock or a stone.
 Our party ne'er meddled with this train of thinking,
 Their thoughts were engaged about eating and drinking;
 For the high hill of Richmond was full in their view,
 And they soon reach'd the bridge, where they landed at two.
 They made haste to the inn, where they'd settled to dine,
 I forget tho' I once heard, the name of the sign.
 From the landlord they met with a welcome most hearty,
 When he saw his friend Jack at the head of the party.
 "These," says Jack, "are some friends whom I've promised to treat,
 You can give us, I hope, a good dinner to eat."
 "I'll provide," says the landlord, "the best I am able,
 A fine sirloin of beef, just fit for the table;
 It was dress'd for ourselves, but 'tis your's if you please,
 Tho' my wife and my children must eat bread and cheese."

But 'tis fair, if I give up my dinner to you,
 You must e'en with my beef take my company
 too."

The terms were accepted, the table-cloth laid,
 And the sirloin soon fell beneath many a blade.
 Then came pipes and tobacco, ale and wine
 too in plenty,
 And a large bowl of punch, fill'd as often as
 empty.

The toast and the bottle passed merrily round,
 And care and reflection in bumpers were
 drown'd.

The landlord, who plainly perceiv'd their con-
 dition,
 Said civilly, Gentlemen, give me permission
 To entreat you to stay, and take supper and
 beds;
 You'll be better, I think, with a house o'er
 your heads:
 You may see that it threatens a storm before
 night,
 And I'm certain you cannot reach home while
 'tis light.

If you don't like the quarters you're in, I'll
 engage
 To send back the boat, if you'll go in the
 stage."

Jack replied, "We have laid too much
 liquor within
 To feel any without, tho' drench'd to the skin.
 As for danger, I scorn it, and all cowards too;
 As for fear, 'tis a vice that this heart never
 knew:
 A few heavy heads, without loss, may be sunk,
 I should swim like a duck, whether sober or
 drunk.

Let those, who suspect that their pates are of
 lead,
 Stay like cowards behind, and sneak safely to
 bed."

Then he call'd for the bill, and the reck'ning
 was paid,
 While each half-drunken hero exclaim'd,
 Who's afraid?

One only, less bold, or less drunk than the
 rest,
 Said he thought that the landlord advis'd for
 the best;
 And, unmov'd by the jeers of the party com-
 bin'd,
 He swore he would sup and would sleep
 where he din'd.

They soon re-embark'd, tho' it blew a fresh
 gale,
 And, in spite of persuasion, Jack hoisted the
 sail.

'Twas not long ere the storm that had threa-
 ten'd drew nigh,
 And clouds and thick darkness envelop'd the
 sky,
 The Almighty insulted, commission'd the
 storm,
 His pow'r to assert, and his vengeance per-
 form.

Next morning we heard the whole party
 were drown'd;
 Too sadly confirm'd when their bodies were
 found.

I was present when all in one grave were in-
 terr'd,
 And the heart-rending cries of their parents
 I heard
 The old couple, weigh'd down by affliction,
 are dead,
 And Nancy still weeps for the loss of her
 Ned.

These few simple facts, thus told without
 art,
 Need no labour'd moral, to speak to the
 heart;
 Yet indulge me a moment, my friends, while
 I mention,
 A few hints, which I hope you'll find worthy
 attention.

To rest from our labours, the goodness of
 Heav'n
 Has kindly indulged us with one day in sev'n,
 Tho' we see that the narrower mercy of men
 Would limit the bounty to one day in ten.*
 To us still our Bibles and Sabbaths are dear,
 Thank God, we have no such hard law-givers
 here.

But he, who forbade us to work on this day,
 Never meant us to spend it in folly and play.
 Dost thou grudge him, who gives thee the
 rest of thy days,
 This one, set apart for his worship and praise?
 Know, thy good is the object and end of the
 plan;

Here, the glory of God is the service of man;
 Improves him in piety, virtue, and worth,
 And begins the employment of Heaven upon
 earth.

'Tis a singular instance of man's depravation,
 That he, the most favoured of God's whole
 creation,
 To win the low fame of an idiot applause,
 Should dishonour his Maker, and mock at his
 laws.

It argues, I think, equal folly and pride,
 Without candid inquiry, that faith to deride,
 By the test of experience for ages approved,
 By wise men admired, and by good men be-
 loved:

For new-fangled schemes, inconsistent and
 crude,
 To renounce ev'ry sentiment virtuous and
 good:
 To attack them with arguments hackney'd and
 stale,
 And abuse of the priests, when all arguments
 fail.

This abuse, I must grant, seems too often to
 fit,
 Yet methinks, 'tis at best, but a poor kind of
 wit.

Tho' the steward be faithless, his master is
 just,
 And will surely require an account of his
 trust.

But with means of improvement so great, your
 defects

* Alluding to the Decadi, or tenth day of
 rest, instituted by the French Government, in
 the place of the Christian Sabbath.

Can claim little indulgence from others' neglects :

The poor Papist, whose Bible is shut from his view,

With some justice may plead this excuse, but not you.

Tho' fair is her face, and enticing her tongue,

Unbelief is from vice, and from ignorance sprung.

Say, what is the sum of the infidel's gains, When exulting, he loosens to pleasure the reins ?

To riot in vice, that enfeebles and cloy, And leaves too a sting, to embitter his joys ;

While he triumphs in proving religion a lie, To live without hope, and despairing to die.

In bigotry cloak'd and distorted by fears, How deform'd and how gloomy Religion appears !

Strip off the disguise—and her visage how bright !

How easy her yoke, and her burden how light !

Hear the glorious Gospel proclaim'd from above ;

Its message is peace, and its temper is love ;

Persuasion its arms, and conviction its force ;

Its author thy God ; and his mercy, its source. Yet not always on earth his children are blest ;

This world's not their home, nor the place of their rest :

To a few he gives power, on others show'rs wealth,

To many, tho' poor, he gives comfort and health ;

And tho' some of his children smart under his rod,

The hand that afflicts is the hand of their God.

Are you happy ? O thank the great giver above :

Are you wretched ? O fly to the fountain of love :

Tho' thousands have tasted its blessings before,

For thousands to come there are blessings in store.

You're a sinner—the greatest of sinners—'tis true—

Yet try, and you'll find there's a blessing for you.—

But presume not, O sinner ! on mercy alone ;

Lo, justice and judgment attend on the throne.

Tho' the thunders may sleep, and the lightnings be still,

They wake at God's summons, and fly at his will ;

And the wretch, who has trifled with mercy shall know,

That his judgments are sure, tho' his anger is slow.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

It is now about eighteen months since the testamentary kindness of an uncle

put me into possession of a good house, and a competent estate, in a very pleasant part of the kingdom. In my early youth, I had passed several happy years under his roof. In returning, after a long absence in a distant quarter of the country, to reside on the property which he had bequeathed to me, I anticipated a renewal of his enjoyments. One source of his enjoyments had been the society of the contemporary clergyman of the village. Rumour informed me, that the place of the old rector was filled by a very respectable man of my own age ; and I promised to myself the same satisfaction from his society, which his predecessor had imparted to mine : perhaps I was foolishly sanguine in my expectations, or, perhaps, my disappointment, for disappointed I have been, may have arisen from something not quite right in myself ; or, perhaps—the truth is, Mr. Editor, that I do not well know what I think, nor what I ought to think, of this clergyman. I wish you to relieve me from my embarrassment. Let me proceed, therefore, to state my case.

Dr. M——, the rector in my uncle's days, was universally esteemed. He united the characters of a magistrate and a clergyman, and I never heard him censured in either. He was constant in his attendance at the quarter sessions, and not unfrequently presided on the bench, and at the subsequent dinner. On the bench he was remarkable for repressing, with proper dignity, the impertinence of attorneys, and the flippancy of young counsel ; and at table, while he promoted decent cheerfulness by announcing, in a very energetic manner, a certain number of stated toasts, of which Church and King was the foremost, he always rose up at the conclusion of his second pipe, and rode back soberly, and by day-light, from the county town to his parsonage. In his own justice room he was equally attentive to uphold the authority of the law, by enforcing respect to himself as its minister. Poachers trembled at his presence. He knew that to snare a hare, or tunnel a partridge, was the first step towards sheep-stealing and burglary, and, I doubt not, that his in-

dignant severity against the snarer and tunneller, was the result of zeal for the prevention of more enormous crimes.

In his functions as a clergyman, he was most exemplary. Precisely as the church clock struck ten, on the Sunday morning, was he always seen coming out of his garden gate opposite to the chancel door. In the afternoon, his exactness was not so great; but as there were only prayers, ten minutes sooner or later were immaterial, and after a comfortable meal a little indolence was excusable. His sermons, which never exceeded the length of sixteen or eighteen minutes, for he said that no congregation could keep up their attention for a longer time, were delivered in a very audible tone; and if a person of more than common consequence happened to be present, he made a point of consulting the credit of religion by extraordinary exertion. He preached against dishonesty, profaneness, drunkenness, and other vices; and shewed how infamous they were, and how much below the dignity of rational beings. I have heard him tell my uncle, who used to take down the text, that the reason why he produced the same sermons, at no very long intervals, was to impress them the more upon the people; and I never understood that any person recollected them. In spite of all this care, his congregation continually diminished; but that was evidently owing to the increase of Dissenters and Methodists. Not having a curate, he gave the vicar of the adjoining parish five guineas a-year to visit the sick, and perform all occasional duty. Thus he enlarged the income of a poor brother; and as the duty was done, it did not signify by whom. Yet so careful was he that nothing necessary should be neglected, that one summer afternoon, having dined with my uncle, he laid down his pipe to go and baptize a sick child, which the vicar, being confined to his bed by a fever, could not attend; and though, as was very natural, he was somewhat ruffled at the interruption, he perfectly recovered himself during supper. In sketching his character, I ought to

have dwelt on his conspicuous loyalty. I remember him, when an address to the throne was in agitation, more earnest in promoting the measure than any other man in the county; and I give no credit to the report which prevailed, that he had an eye to the crown living, to which some months afterwards he chanced to be presented.

The Doctor having luckily freed himself, as I have observed, from professional occupations during six days in the week; and having steadily restricted his justice business to the forenoons of Fridays, except in the case of poachers, complaints against whom he was at all times ready to receive, was at liberty to enjoy himself. His plan was regularly to devote the forenoon to sports of the field, and the rest of the day to ease and convivial relaxation. In the early parts of his life he had been a keen hunter and a capital shot; but when I knew him he was become corpulent and inactive; and had turned his mind almost exclusively to coursing. To coursing my uncle was equally attached: hence their friendship was cemented. And so necessary did they find themselves to each other, that the competitions resulting from the pursuit of the same science disturbed not their harmony. Together, day after day, they trained, inspected, matched, and compared their dogs; and after the fatigues of the morning, together refreshed themselves with a hearty dinner, a social glass, and pipes repeatedly replenished. Thus happily their lives flowed while I resided with my uncle; and thus happily, as I have been informed, they flowed on to their close.

On the day after my arrival at my new abode, I introduced myself to the Doctor's successor, and was received by him with such respectful and engaging kindness, that I trusted I should find myself no less fortunate than my uncle. I am myself, Mr. Editor, extremely fond of all the diversions of the field; and am, therefore, very attentive to the preservation of my game. It happened, within some few days after this visit, that my servants seized a man

in the act of setting a net for partridges within my manor. Not having yet taken out my dedimus, I despatched him in their custody to the Rector, that he might be committed. They surprised me by bringing back intelligence, that the Rector was not a magistrate; intelligence which that gentleman speedily confirmed in person, alleging that he had not leisure for the office; and that, indeed, if he had been less occupied, he should have thought himself able to do the most good by declining it. These reasons augmented my surprise. I recollected that the old Rector, who was at least as much busied in sporting as the new one could be, had found time to act as a magistrate; and I did not clearly see how it was possible to do greater good than by repressing those pests of society, who strip the country of game, its principal attraction. However, as our acquaintance was but commencing, I kept my thoughts to myself, and determined to qualify myself, without delay, to protect the wild inhabitants of my domain. The following morning I was informed, just as the breakfast table was removed, that a hare had been discovered on its seat upon the ferny bank behind the house. My uncle had displayed his regard for his intimate friends, by bequeathing to them a greyhound a-piece. I had not yet been able to provide a stock of my own. I sent a message, therefore, to the parsonage, requesting the loan of a brace of dogs. Formerly, when I had known a similar message sent thither, Smoaker and Juno were leaping at our gate long before the servant had reached it on his return, and the Doctor mounted on his old hunter was speedily seen coming after them. But I now received a civil note from the clergyman, intimating that he did not keep any greyhounds. This second check to my expectations led me to suspect that there must be something odd in this clergyman. I inquired, therefore, in the neighbourhood, with some care, into his proceedings. I found, not only that he never coursed, but that he was never known to touch a gun, nor to join Lord L——'s fox-

hounds, nor even the subscription pack of harriers kept in the nearest market town. I could not imagine, Mr. Editor, what he could do with himself. I understood too that he was not fond of cards; that he was not a member of any club; that he avoided convivial meetings; and that he had few intimates, and those chiefly among the graver clergy. How he could contrive to get rid of his day surpassed my comprehension more and more. The man, however, it was clear must do *something*; and I was determined to find out what it was.

The experience of eighteen months has given me some insight into his conduct. During several hours of most days, he appears to occupy himself in going about the parish, which is considerably populous, and includes two hamlets placed at its opposite extremities; and in making calls sometimes at the farm-houses, but more frequently at the habitations of the peasantry. Now and then, when I have stepped into one of the cottages, to procure a boy to assist in marking partridges, I have found the Rector talking to the people about religion, though there was nobody sick in the house; or reading something out of the Bible, a book which I never had seen in the old Doctor's hands except on a Sunday. By inquiries at different places, I found his visits were in general of this nature. This seemed to me to be righteous overmuch. But I really was pleased, Mr. Editor, to discover that sometimes, when his servant was busy, he would travel a mile or two with a bottle of wine in one pocket and of nourishing broth in the other, a load as heavy as if he had had a hare slung over his shoulder, to leave with families where there was some invalid in want of strengthening sustenance; and that he would frequently send money to the indigent, to an extent which, the smallness of the rectory being considered, excited my wonder. I have strong reasons for believing, that when he is within doors, he is usually moping over his books, or writing sermons; a burden which he has contributed to bring upon himself by preaching not only in the forenoon of Sunday but in the afternoon

also. Except for this additional sermon, and for the length of his discourses, which actually take up half an hour or more, no fault can be found with him in the Church. I love to have the service read respectably; and he certainly reads it remarkably well. The sermons likewise, long as they last, are really less tedious than those of the old Rector were, and do not make people drowsy. He preaches much more about faith, and atonement and grace, and such sort of things than the Doctor did; yet, even in those sermons, which are the most about these subjects, he always contrives before the end to give us a trimming lecture about good works; and, in fact, he puts those matters so pointedly, that for the time he often makes me feel queerly, though I hardly ever did any harm in my life. Nay, two swearing and drunken labourers, who worked with my uncle, and a third worse than either, who lived with the Doctor, none of whom had ever been the better for his preaching, are grown habitually sober, and a profane word never comes out of their mouths. It is said in the parish, that there are various other instances of the same kind. The Church, which used to be so cold and empty, is, in general, handsomely filled; and I hear that he has on prayer days as large a congregation as used to attend on Sundays.

All these things put together have convinced many persons, and some too I am told of the neighbouring clergy, that our Rector is a Methodist. Yet I have several reasons for not being of that opinion. One is, that Methodists preach extempore: whereas I am sure that he reads his sermon, though, indeed, he is as animated as if he had it by heart: another is, that all Methodists are hypocrites; whereas, I verily think, the Rector is, after all, a good sort of a man. My third reason is, that he has almost driven the Methodists out of the parish, the greater part of the members of the meeting having left it to come constantly to Church, and there is a talk of the meeting-house being shut up. Besides, a shrewd man once told me, that the name of Methodists is often given as a nick-name to any one who has more religion than

those who call him so. If that account be true, really, Mr. Editor, between ourselves I do not wonder that many in our part of the country, and even some of the parsons among the rest, have given that nick name to our clergyman. You will easily see that we never have become intimate, for we are quite upon different scents; yet when we meet, he is so mild and pleasing in his manners, so kind and friendly, that I could actually find in my heart to love him. In short, Sir, I am altogether at a loss whether he is better or not than he needs to be, and whether I ought to love him or not; and I hope that your advice will remove the perplexity of your unknown humble servant,

S. T.

ANECDOTE.

ABRAHAM Moivre was born at Vitri, in Champagne, A. D. 1667. At the revocation of the edict of Nantes, he determined to fly into England rather than abandon the religion of his fathers. Before he left France, he had begun the study of mathematics; and he perfected himself in that science in London. His success in such studies procured him a seat in the Royal Society in London, and in the Academy of Sciences at Paris. He could never endure any bold assertions or indecent witticisms against religion. A person one day thought to pay him a compliment by observing, that mathematicians were attached to no religion. He answered, "I show you, Sir, that I am a Christian, by forgiving the speech you have now made."

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

IN a book of travels which I lately read, I found the following anecdote concerning the famous actor Mr. Betterton. Being one day at dinner at his Grace's the Archbishop of Canterbury, his Grace expressed his astonishment, that the representation of fables in their pieces should make more impression upon the mind, than that of truth in the sermons of the clergy; upon which Mr. Betterton desiring leave to explain the reason of it, and obtaining it, on condition of

preserving the respect due to religion, said, "May it please your Grace, it is because the clergy, in reading their sermons, pronounce them as if they were reading fables; and we in acting our parts, and using them in a proper gesture, represent them like matters of fact." There is, undoubtedly, a considerable degree of weight in Mr. Berton's observation; the want of life,

earnestness, and energy, in the clergy, prevents their being attended to in the manner that could be wished, and greatly lessens the effect of their discourses.

Especially.

P. S. I hope the above anecdote will give no offence to those who ought rather to be my counsellors.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

LXII. *Remarks on the Controversy subsisting, or supposed to subsist, between the Arminian and Calvinistic Ministers of the Church of England, in a Second Letter to the Reverend John Overton, A. B. Author of the True Churchmen ascertained.* By EDWARD PEARSON, B. D. Rector of Rempstone, Nottinghamshire, pp. 8vo. 102. Hatchard, 1802.

It was naturally to be expected, that a work of so important a tendency as that of Mr. Overton's "True Churchmen ascertained," should awaken much attention among the members, and especially the ministers of the established Church. So very minute and elaborate an investigation of the sentiments of many modern divines, contrasted with the theological writings of earlier times, and supported by numerous extracts from each, necessarily opens an ample field for discussion. Whatever opinion the more judicious and enlightened readers of Mr. Overton's work may form, as to the full establishment of every point which he has undertaken to prove, they cannot possibly deny, that in very many instances he has demonstrated the manifest contradiction of doctrine, which subsists between several writers of the present day and those of the period referred to. That much advantage to the real interests of religion will arise from the discussion, we are fully persuaded; indeed, in several instances, we have already witnessed its good effect; and though we may not expect to see perfect harmony established among all the members of the Church of England with respect to several points of doubtful disputation, yet we do hope that the prevalence of certain erroneous tenets, which have for some time past been widely circulated in the Church, will be lessened if not prevented; and that

more reciprocal love and esteem between the maintainers of opposite systems will be permanently cultivated. Some of Mr. Overton's opponents, however, have betrayed such an acrimonious spirit, and have so widely departed from that charitable and peaceable temper which ought to regulate all Christian controversy, as rather to have evinced the irritability of their passions than the strength of their arguments. We shall always enter our protest against the language and temper of the angry, proud, supercilious, and railing controversialist; and feeling, we trust, nothing of the *odium theologicum* ourselves we shall think it our duty to express a marked disapprobation of every symptom of it in others; and though we may often be led, by a regard to truth, to controvert the opinions of authors, yet it is our wish to do it without any undue severity either of phrase or sentiment.

We are glad to see a favourable exception to the foregoing censure in the respectable author of the pamphlet before us, of whose former letter to Mr. Overton we have already given some account in our magazine for the month of July (p. 442). We then stated, and again repeat, that although we do not think Mr. Pearson has succeeded in his endeavour to prove any discordancy between Mr. Overton's statement of the doctrine of justification and that of the English reformers, yet we willingly give him the praise of candour and forbearance in his general mode of carrying on the controversy. In the present publication, Mr. Pearson declares, that in making those remarks his "great design, next to that of promoting the cause of religious truth (the prevalence

of which must, in the end, be productive of general good) is to bring all the members of the establishment, if not, according to the apostolic exhortation, to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment, yet to bear with each other's difference of opinion in humility and meekness, and to hold the faith in unity of spirit (or affection) and in the bond of peace." It is also the main design of our own publication to promote the same end, and to unite every pious, humble, and orthodox member of the establishment, whatever may be his views of some controverted points, in a concordant endeavour to advance the cause of the genuine Gospel of Christ, and the extension of his kingdom in the hearts of men.

Upon the subject of the Arminian and Calvinistic controversy, and the interpretation of the articles and other public standards of our Church, we have already given our general sentiments. We shall therefore only observe in this place, that an attentive examination of the doctrines which have been held by our most eminent divines, and published in their writings for 260 years past, has taught us to view the sentiments of the judicious and pious individuals of each party with great esteem and regard. In both, we trace much learning, much zeal for the honour of God, much genuine piety, and much anxiety to bring forth fruits worthy of their calling. We readily, therefore, subscribe to the moderate and conciliating sentiments of the present learned Bishop of St. Asaph, in his charge, of the year 1800. "I confess," says that discriminating prelate, "I cannot understand upon what principle our brethren of the Calvinistic persuasion should demand of us, that we should adopt either the resolutions of the synod of Dort, or what are called the Lambeth articles, as the necessary exposition of the articles of our Church. But I as little understand, upon what principle our Arminian brethren should insist, that we should set forth their opinions, as if they were asserted in our articles, in their true and plain meaning, in condemnation of the Calvinistic. I know not what hinders, but that the highest supralapsarian Calvinist may be as good

a churchman as an Arminian. And if the Church of England, in her moderation, opens her arms to both, neither can, with a very good grace, desire that the other should be excluded. I must, however, declare, that when I speak of Calvinism and Arminianism as capable of uniting in one communion, and that one the communion of the Church of England; I look only to Calvinism, such as the venerable Calvin would himself have owned, not enriched and embellished with the extravagances of later visionaries; and I look to Arminianism, such as the pious Arminius would have owned, not fouled and tainted with the loathsome admixtures of Arian and Pelagian heresies."

The first of Mr. Pearson's "remarks," respects the term "evangelical," as applied to those ministers of the established Church, whom Mr. Overton particularly undertakes to defend; and here Mr. Pearson appears to be decidedly mistaken as to the appropriation of the epithet. Mr. Overton has very fully admitted, and indeed an impartial view of the case must constrain every one to acknowledge, that many authors, books, and preachers of the present, as well as of past days, are termed *evangelical*, though they advance nothing peculiar to Calvinism, nay, in several instances are clearly on the Arminian side. The term "evangelical" is applied, by men of discrimination, to all, of whatever party, who earnestly enforce the doctrines of original sin, salvation by grace through faith in the Redeemer, and the necessity of regeneration by the holy spirit. Now it is well known, that many who disown the appellation of Calvinism, and have avowedly controverted some of its tenets, do, nevertheless, in common with the Calvinists, stedfastly inculcate these doctrines, and consider them of the last importance to the welfare of their flocks; and in this they think they are strongly supported by the unequivocal language of the Church of England in all her public documents.

Mr. Pearson, therefore, does not seem to be justified in considering "a Calvinistic and an Arminian interpretation of certain articles, as the only or chief difference between Mr Overton and his opponents;" for although we

have in our review of "The True Churchmen ascertained," observed that its author sometimes *appears* to use the term "evangelical" rather too exclusively, yet he expressly allows it to have a more widely extended application, and equally to include all humble, devout, and pious Christians, whether Arminian or Calvinist. The truth is, and Mr. Pearson does not appear sufficiently to appreciate it, that the term Arminian, in its modern acceptation, comprises a very large class of divines, widely differing in sentiment from each other: it includes every gradation of doctrine between the boundaries of moderate Calvinism and avowed Socinianism, each of which, indeed, it professes to exclude, but is not limited by any other express qualifications. A very superficial comparison between the writings, for instance, of Bishop Horne, Mr. Jones of Nayland, Mr. Gisborne, Mr. Wilberforce, Mrs. More, Mr. Daubeny, D. Knox, Dr. Paley, Dr. Croft, Mr. Ludlam, Mr. Polwhele, Mr. Fellows, and many others, some of whom are quoted by Mr. Overton, will convince their readers, that very different principles and modes of interpreting Scripture prevail amongst them, and that they frequently deliver doctrines wholly irreconcilable to one and the same system of opinions. Amongst these, some hold decidedly those tenets which are particularly denominated evangelical, whilst others decline from their system, by various shades of disagreement, till the approach towards the principles of Pelagius and Socinus becomes clearly manifest.

We sincerely accord with this respectable writer, in an aversion "from the practice of bestowing opprobrious appellations, as well as from that of assuming arrogant ones." We are aware that many distinctions, of an invidious nature, have been drawn without sufficient reasons for so doing: at the same time, whilst so great a difference prevails amongst the clergy, with regard to the mode of stating the terms of salvation and enforcing them on their hearers, it will probably be no easy matter to prevent the appropriation of some discriminating name to Christ. *Observ. No. 12.*

those, whether Arminians or Calvinists, who preach the doctrines of faith, grace, and sanctification, as they are to be deduced from the Bible, and in the spirit and temper which characterized our forefathers at the time of the reformation. Whoever does this, is an evangelical preacher, and ought to be spoken of as such on every occasion; whilst there is no injustice, on the other hand, in calling that doctrine *anti-evangelical*, which partakes, more or less, of those unscriptural heresies which the Church of England distinctly disclaims. Under these limitations, we think Mr. Pearson perfectly right in saying,

"It is devoutly to be wished, that all difference of opinion among the ministers of the establishment, which renders terms of distinction necessary, may speedily be done away; but if, unhappily, this should not be the case, it may yet very reasonably be insisted on, that the use of such terms of distinction on the one side, as imply a dereliction of professed principles on the other, be carefully avoided."

Mr. Pearson very candidly adds:

"According to my idea, no one, who professes to adhere to the doctrines of the Church, and who does not, by his conduct, evidently militate against its discipline, ought to be stigmatized with the name of *Methodist*; for a Methodist is one who sets the discipline of the Church at defiance, and breaks out into open schism" (p. 9)

We sincerely wish this observation were duly attended to, not only by the more thoughtless and irreligious part of the community, to whom the very name of serious religion and practical piety is an object of contempt and derision, but also by those, who, from their learning, station, and character, are looked up to as examples, and who ought to know, that to affix a name of reproach to every religious system which does not happen, in all its parts, to harmonize with their own, contributes most powerfully to the suppression of truth and the extinction of piety and zeal.

In the course of this pamphlet, we have met with many observations upon the subject of Calvinism and Calvinists, which we think this candid author would hardly have adopted or published, had he not been accustomed to view a very distorted representation of them, in the works of those authors to

whom he refers the reader, for information on the controversy in question. Some of them we decidedly object to as being far from impartial guides to truth. Dr. Peter Heylin, for instance, has been repeatedly convicted of false statements of historical facts, of perverted quotation, and of illegitimate inferences from both; to which he has added such an acrimonious bigotry of sentiment and language, as wholly deprives him of the confidence of an unprejudiced inquirer after truth. It is not by referring to the eager partizans on either side of the question, that the cause will obtain a fair hearing. The true method of ascertaining, for instance, the real merits or demerits of Calvinism, is not to view the wretched effects of a nominal, fanatical, and perverted profession of Calvinistic tenets, in the mouths of sectaries and regicides; nor in the ecclesiastical disquisitions and histories of subsequent authors, who evidently labour under the strong bias of prejudice; but to consult the various writings, doctrinal, historical, biographical, and practical, of our own bishops and clergy, at the period when Calvinistic tenets were avowedly held by numbers of eminent men amongst them, who were no less distinguished by zeal against puritanism and democracy, than by learning, abilities, piety, and success in promoting practical religion among their flocks. There are abundant materials for this purpose in the books which were published from the commencement of the reign of King Edward VI. till the close of that of James I.; and we are decidedly of opinion, that such a review of original records, uninfluenced by the remarks and conclusions of later controversialists and historians, is absolutely requisite, in order to form a satisfactory idea of what were, or were not, the nature and tendency of the doctrines in question. It is our wish to preserve a more even balance between the two parties than has usually been done by partizans on either side, and though we give full credit to Mr. Pearson for the forbearance which he manifests, and which is the more to be commended, as he confesses that his prejudices are against

one side of the question; yet we think that many of his remarks would lead readers, not versed in the subject, to form unfounded prejudices against many authors and clergymen, both living and dead, who, in every sense of the word, have deserved well of their country and of the church.

In the second division of this publication, Mr. Pearson undertakes to prove, that, in the statement of the doctrine of justification by faith, he has on his side the judicious Hooker, *virtually* affirming the tenet of both a first, and a second or final, justification as laid down by him in his former letter to Mr. Overton; and even quotes the very passage from Hooker, which Mr. Overton has brought forward in his work, as a testimony of the opposite doctrine. We ourselves feel a thorough conviction, that Hooker universally asserts the doctrine of justification in perfect conformity with the language of the reformers in general, and of our own in particular. We have not been able, after a very attentive inquiry into the subject, to discover any real difference of statement on this very important point, between the confessions of the Lutheran, Helvetic, French, and English protestant churches; nor between the private writings of those who were principally concerned in drawing them up, or for many succeeding years afterwards were employed in commenting upon them. We acknowledge at the same time the great difficulty of so expressing any doctrine whatever, as that different interpretations may not be drawn from the same form of words. This appears very strikingly in the instance before us, wherein Mr. Pearson has, with considerable plausibility, though we cannot admit with either critical or theological accuracy, endeavoured to prove a discordancy between Hooker's sentiments on justification by faith, and those of Mr. Overton. If Mr. Pearson's explanation of that judicious author's language were just, it would follow, that he was highly inconsistent with himself; as in several other parts of his works he has most clearly, and we apprehend decisively avowed that very tenet which Mr. Overton de-

fends, and to which Mr. Pearson objects.

Mr. Pearson seems to labour under the mistake of supposing the Calvinists to *depreciate* good works, only because, in the scheme of redemption, they assign them a different place from some of their opponents. As *essentially necessary* to salvation, they in general most earnestly enforce them; but *efficiently productive* of salvation they do not admit them to be. Those who hold the *primitive* doctrine of justification by faith only, whether they be of the school of Calvin or Arminius, (for the tenet is by no means confined to either party) will adopt the language of the late excellent Bishop Horne; and say,

"To what purpose then serve good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification? The twelfth article will tell us: (here followeth the article,)—the fruit receives its goodness from the tree, not the tree from the fruit, which does not make the tree good, but shews it *to be so*, because men do not gather grapes off thornes. so works receive all their goodness from faith, not faith from works, which do not themselves justify, but shew a prior justification of the soul that produces them; as it is written, we know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. Again, faith has one intrinsic excellency, of which works are destitute: and that is, that it will justify a sinner, and carry him to heaven, as it did the thief upon the cross: this, I think, gives it a vast pre-eminence over works, which *cannot justify, otherwise than as fruits they evidence the faith that does*; for we are justified by faith only, says the eleventh article, upon the authority of scripture." (Apol. for cert. Gentlemen, p. 13 and 65.)

Exactly on the same idea of this doctrine does Hooker build his system of justification, a term which he never confounds with final salvation.

Hooker, indeed, as might be proved by quotations from his writings, was a sublapsarian, and held, in common with all sublapsarians, the doctrines of *one* justification, and that by faith alone; of the imputation of Christ's merits to the believer; of final perseverance; and of the necessarily consequent sanctification of all who are justified. See, to this effect, his Discourse on Justification, sect. 21 and 26, and his Sermon on Jude. We had prepared these passages for insertion, as they are decisive in supporting the view we have given

of Hooker's tenets, but we have been prevented by the fear of too greatly extending this article. We have them, however, in reserve, should they be called for, and shall content ourselves at present with a short extract from the 29th section of his discourse on Justification, which seems to be not a little at variance with the sentiments attributed to him by Mr. Pearson.

"He that should say our election is of grace for our works sake, should grant in sound of words, but indeed by consequent deny, that our election is of grace; for the grace which electeth us is no grace, if it elect us for our works sake."

Indeed, if it be admitted that Hooker held the doctrine of final perseverance, and no one who is acquainted with his writings will deny it, an end is at once put to the dispute; for all who know any thing of the subject, know that this doctrine is peculiar to Calvinism.

In what we have said, our object is not to prove the truth or falsehood of the doctrines he held, but to ascertain what were really the sentiments of this great luminary of our Church; and we are greatly mistaken, if the passages to which we have referred, do not prove to a demonstration, that Hooker never considered justification but as a single act, wholly unconnected with any *previous* condition of good works; while, at the same time, he regards it as always implying, that is, including as a necessary and inseparable adjunct, sanctification and holiness of heart and life. We have been thus distinct in stating Hooker's opinions, because Mr. Pearson has, in some degree, called upon us to vindicate our review of Mr. Overton's work on this very subject (p. 29.) With regard to the particular passage alluded to, we are satisfied that Hooker, in the fifth section as well as in the whole of his discourse on Justification, designed to refute, not merely the *superstitious* part of the popish doctrine concerning an increasing and secondary justification, but also its virtual assertion under any more rational scheme of interpretation: and we feel convinced, that an unprejudiced examiner and collater of the different parts of Hooker's works, will admit our representation of his sentiments to be just.

Concerning the admission of Calvinism into the Church of England, Mr. Pearson observes,

"Though I do not think that Calvinism, even in your moderate sense of it, was intended to be established by the articles, &c. of the Church of England, neither do I think, that it was intended to be altogether excluded. If, therefore, you had been content with affirming, that in subscribing to the articles in the Calvinistic sense, you had a right to be considered as a legitimate member and minister of the Church of England, you would not have had to number me among your opponents (p. 31.) And again, I find more cause of blame in your mode of maintaining your opinions than in the opinions themselves (p. 33.) Where a latitude of interpretation is intended to be allowed, it does not follow, as in other cases, because one interpretation is right, that another, which is somewhat different, is wrong; and my opinion is, that if, so far as subscription to the articles is concerned, either Arminian or Calvinistic ministers of the establishment are wrong, it is only in considering themselves *exclusively* right." (p. 33.)

We cannot help lamenting, that an author who has made the foregoing just and candid concessions, should have given currency to so many incorrect observations and statements of historical facts, on the subject of this controversy, as he has done in several quotations and deductions, from different authors of a very prejudiced character. For although we give Mr. Pearson the fullest credit for his *own* conviction of the authenticity of their details, and the justice of their reasoning; yet a regard for truth compels us to remark, that he seems by no means to have so attentively examined opposite statements of facts and inferences, as was clearly his duty previous to an appeal to the public on so very important a subject. We cannot indeed persuade ourselves, that he has perused any considerable portion of the documents which the Church of England Calvinist would allege in his own behalf; otherwise, his candour must, we think, have induced him to state many points differently.

A leading error, which pervades the principal part of the pamphlet before us, is the confounding Calvinism with Puritanism: this, whether applied to ancients or moderns, and Mr. Pearson applies it to both, is a mistake of the very first magnitude, and leads to several

erroneous observations and conclusions. During the reign of Elizabeth, and nearly the whole of that of James I. the episcopal divines, though in their views of doctrinal points they harmonized with the Puritans, were a body as distinguished from them, in political and ecclesiastical conduct and sentiment, as ever, in after times, were the Arminians themselves: nor were they confounded until the violence of political party, united, perhaps, with too much of a polemical spirit, led men to do so. It is an undeniable fact, testified by a numerous list of authorities of various descriptions, that the Church and the Monarchy of England never had more zealous, more steady, or more able champions, than in that great body of episcopalian divines and statesmen, who, during the abovenamed period, were avowedly Calvinistic in sentiment: nor had the democratical principles, the schismatical scheming, or the antinomian licentiousness of those who overturned the established Church and Monarchy, more determined adversaries than were to be found amongst them. The same, we are convinced, is generally speaking true of the *Church of England Calvinists* of the present day. We believe that more conscientious antischismatics, more zealous anti-jacobins, and more consistent members of the established Church are no where to be found, than among those who subscribe and explain the 39 articles, in what, for distinction sake, is called the Calvinistic sense. We think it would be equally as erroneous and unfair, to ascribe the downfall of the English Church and Monarchy, in the last century but one, to the efficacy of Calvinism; as to impute the massacre of Louis XVI. and the horrors of the French Revolution, to the prevalence of Anti-calvinistic principles.

We have thought it right to say thus much, in order to obviate that gross misrepresentation, of which several violent writers both of past and present times have been guilty, in describing the tendency of Calvinistic sentiments. We conceive, that the most efficacious and truly Christian method of promoting harmony and forbearance, amongst the Arminian and Calvinistic members

of the establishment, is, not by encouraging each party to grant a mere sullen and extorted toleration of each other, but by striving to convince them mutually, that both moderate Calvinism and moderate Arminianism are, when rightly understood, highly calculated to promote the honour of God, holiness of life, and evangelical benevolence; and that, as so very many of each description have been amongst the most truly wise, learned, pious, and useful members of the Church of England, mutual esteem and love are due from the upright and well meaning of each party towards the other. Not merely forbearance, but regard, ought to be reciprocally cultivated: so will our breaches and animosities be happily healed and composed. Passing over, therefore, many passages in Mr. Pearson's publication, which our anxiety for the cause of truth and peace makes us lament have found insertion, we extract, with pleasure, the following sentiments from the close of it.

"It appears, from what I have stated, that the difference between an Arminian and a Calvinistic interpretation of the articles, is a case to which the Apostle's rule may very properly be applied, and in which, therefore, it ought to be implicitly observed. 'Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth.' With respect to this difference, we are required, as has been seen, by the royal declaration prefixed to the articles, to lay aside all further curious search, and to shut up these disputes in God's promises, as they be generally set forth to us in the Holy Scriptures, and in the general meaning of the articles of the Church of England according to them. Perhaps, as the means of settling the dissensions which prevail, or, at least, of preventing any mischievous effects from them, it might be expedient, in the present state of the Church, to adopt a measure similar to that I have referred to, and to declare by authority, that it is not the intention of the Church of England so to narrow the terms of communion, as individuals, both Arminians and Calvinists, have sometimes been led to imagine. In the mean time, I beg leave to propose, as the conditions of a peace more honourable to the parties, because more voluntary, that the Calvinists, and so far as they are concerned in them, the Arminians also, should agree to the faithful observance of the the following canons:

"1. To renounce, as a term of *distinction* (i. e. between Arminians and Calvinists), the title of evangelical.

"2. To abstain from all declarations and insinuations, that they alone preach the true doctrine of Scripture and of the Church.

"3. To avoid all proceedings in practice which may tend to diminish, in the estimation of the people, the importance of an attention to the established discipline."

We sincerely wish, that some of the Arminian authors, to whom Mr. Pearson refers the reader for information on the merits of this controversy, had been guided, in their sentiments and language, by the foregoing principles, which he has laid down; we should be equally glad also, if every maintainer of the Calvinistic side of the question had refrained from that asperity of treatment and needless indulgence of opprobrious language, which, on either side of the contest, betray weakness and irritability of temper, rather than a real zeal for the true interests of ecclesiastical peace and union. Above all, we earnestly recommend to every theological controversialist, to cultivate that charitable spirit of brotherly kindness, and that meek submissiveness of temper, which are the genuine characteristics of real Christianity; "let them bear and forbear, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrary wise blessing; knowing that they are thereunto called, that they should inherit a blessing."

LXIII. *Helps to Composition; or, Five Hundred Skeletons of Sermons; several being the Substance of Sermons, preached before the University* By the Rev. CHARLES SIMEON, M. A. Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. 2 vols. large 8vo. vol. I. parts I. and II. pp. xi. and 689. vol. II. parts I. and II. pp. 784. 1801, 1802.

BEFORE we proceed to the consideration of the principal, and indeed the proper subject of these important volumes, we conceive that we shall render no trifling service to religion, and to her real friends, by paying particular attention to the Preface. The sentiments contained in it are distinguished by so much solidity and moderation, that they cannot fail of being peculiarly grateful to every reader, who holds those qualities in their due estimation. Their seasonableness, likewise, makes

no inconsiderable addition to their value. These circumstances would, of themselves, be sufficient to justify us in giving prominence, and, as far as in our power lies, publicity to the opinions in question: but we are confirmed in this resolution by the *professional* nature of the work in which they are found; a circumstance which would naturally prevent them from being so widely diffused as their importance deserves.

After adverting to his former publication, and observing the advantage which the present has over it, in respect of VARIETY, Mr. Simeon proceeds—

“In the discussion of so many subjects, it cannot fail but that every doctrine of our holy religion must be more or less canvassed. On every point, the author has spoken freely, and without reserve. As for names and parties in religion, he equally disclaims them all: he takes his religion from the Bible; and endeavours, as much as possible, to speak as that speaks.* Hence, as in the Scriptures themselves, so also in this work, where will be found sentiments, not really opposite, but apparently of an opposite tendency, according to the subject that is under discussion. In writing, for instance, on John v. 40. ‘*Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life;*’ he does not hesitate to lay the whole blame of men’s condemnation on the obstinacy of their own depraved will: nor does he think it at all necessary to weaken the subject by nice distinctions, in order to support a system. On the contrary, when he preaches on John vi. 44. ‘*No man can come unto me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him;*’ he does not scruple to state, in the fullest manner he is able, ‘that we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will:’ nor does he judge it expedient, on any account, to soften, and palliate, and fritter away this important truth. While too many set these passages at variance, and espouse the one in opposition to the other, he dwells with equal pleasure on them both; and thinks it, on the whole, better to state these apparently opposite truths, in the plain and unsophisticated manner of the Scriptures, than to enter into scholastic subtleties, that have been invented for the upholding human systems. He is aware, that they who are warm advocates for this or that system of religion, will be ready

to condemn him as inconsistent: but, if he speak in exact conformity with the Scriptures, he shall rest the vindication of his conduct simply on the authority and example of the inspired writers. He has no desire to be wise above what is written, nor any conceit that he can teach the Apostles to speak with more propriety and correctness than they have spoken.

“It may be asked, perhaps, How do you reconcile these doctrines, which you believe to be of equal authority and equal importance? But what right has any man to impose this task upon the preachers of God’s word? God has not required it of them; nor is the truth or falsehood of any doctrine to be determined absolutely by this criterion. It is presumed, that every one will acknowledge the holiness of God, and the existence of sin: but will any one undertake to reconcile them? Or does any one consider the inability of man to reconcile them, as a sufficient ground for denying either the one or the other of these truths? If then, neither of these points are doubted, notwithstanding they cannot be reconciled by us, why should other points, equally obvious in some respects, yet equally difficult to be reconciled in others, be incompatible, merely because we, with our limited capacity, cannot perfectly discern their harmony and agreement.” (pp. v, vi.)

The author then proceeds to observe, that these points, which have been such a fruitful source of contention in the church, may possibly not be so opposite to each other as some imagine, and that the truth may lie, not exclusively in either, nor yet in a confused mixture of both; but in the seasonable application of both; or, to use the language of St. Paul, in “rightly dividing the word of truth.” He professes his despair of satisfying any who have decidedly ranged themselves under the standard either of Calvin or Arminius; but hopes to gain, from all parties, a favourable acceptance of what they do approve, and a candid forbearance with respect to the points which they disapprove. It would be impossible to do justice to Mr Simeon’s statement of his sentiments upon this subject, without transcribing almost the whole of what he has written upon it. He represents it as a matter of certain experience that man is a free agent; and he considers it as equally certain that, in the superiority of Christians above the rest of the world, it is a power from above that causes them to differ, and by

* In a note on this place, Mr. Simeon refers to Mr Overton’s work with deserved commendation.

the grace of God they are what they are. The same observations which apply to the *commencement*, apply likewise to the *progress* of this good work; and Mr. Simeon contends, that while we feel in ourselves a constant liability to fall, we are nevertheless to consider ourselves as kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

"Why then," says he, "*must* these things be put in opposition to each other, so that every advocate for one of these points must of necessity controvert and explode the other? Only let any *pious* person, whether Calvinist or Arminian, examine the language of his prayers, after he has been devoutly pouring out his soul before God, and he will find his own words almost in perfect consonance with the foregoing statement. The Calvinist will be confessing the extreme depravity of his nature, together with his liability and proneness to fall; and the Arminian will be glorifying God for all that is good within him, and will commit his soul to God, in order that *He* who has laid the foundation of his own spiritual temple, may also finish it." (vii.)

In a note at the bottom of the same page, Mr. Simeon relates a conversation which took place between a young minister, reputed a Calvinist, and the venerable leader of the Arminian Methodist. It illustrates and corroborates the foregoing representation, in a very striking and forcible manner.

Mr. Simeon acknowledges, that either of the doctrines under discussion may be injudiciously stated or improperly applied—that of election and predestination, when it is made to destroy the responsibility of man—that of free-will and liableness to apostacy, when it is so represented as to rob God of the honour of being both the *author* and the *finisher* of our faith. Yet, without attempting to reconcile the two doctrines, an undertaking which he has declined as impracticable, he conceives that, by a judicious statement, and a proper application, they are not only agreeable to truth, but are calculated to produce the most salutary effects.

We shall content ourselves with only one additional extract from this conciliating disquisition, in which the Author states his own views of Christian doctrine, as well as the general object of his work.

"The Author well knows that these doctrines *may be*, and, alas! *too often are*, so stated, as to be really contradictory. But that they *may be* so stated as to be profitable to the souls of men, he hopes is clear from the illustrations that have been just given.

"He trusts he shall be pardoned if he go yet further, and say, that, in his judgment, there not only is no positive contradiction in this statement, but that there is a *propriety* in it, yea moreover, a *necessity* for it, because there is a *subserviency* in those truths, the one to the other. God elects us: but he carries his purpose into effect by the free agency of man, which is altogether influenced by rational considerations. So also he carries on and completes his work in our souls, by causing us to feel our proneness to apostatize, and by making us cry to him daily for the more effectual influences of his grace. Thus, while he consults his own glory, he promotes our greatest good, in that he teaches us to combine humility with earnestness, and vigilance with composure.

"The Author would not have troubled the reader with this apology, were it not that he is exceedingly desirous to counteract that spirit of animosity, which has of late so greatly prevailed against those who adhere to the principles of the Established Church. Not that he has himself any cause to complain; on the contrary, he has reason to acknowledge, that his former volume met with a far more favourable reception from the public than he ever dared to expect. But he would have his work be brought to this test. Does it uniformly tend

"TO HUMBLE THE SINNER?

"TO EXALT THE SAVIOUR?

"TO PROMOTE HOLINESS?

"If in one single instance it lose sight of any of these points, let it be condemned without mercy: * but if it invariably pursue these ends, then let not any, whatever system they embrace, quarrel with an expression, which does not quite accord with their views. Let them consider the general scope and tendency of the book; and if it be, as he trusts it is, not to strengthen a party in the Church, but to promote the good of the whole; then let smaller differences of sentiment be overlooked, and all unite in vindicating the great doctrines of SALVATION BY GRACE, THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST." (pp. x, xi.)

We conceive it is superfluous for us

* This passage, we apprehend, must be more strongly expressed than the author intended. It looks as if he claimed to himself the merit of having produced a faultless work, a claim which we should be slow in any case to admit; although, at the same time, we should deem ourselves unjust were we to condemn any work *without mercy*, on account of its failing, in one or more instances, to answer the pious purposes of its author.

to add any apology for our extended extracts from a discussion so important in itself, and conducted with so much temper.

(To be continued.)

LXIV. *A Sermon, preached at the Parish Church of St. Andrew by the Wardrobe and St. Ann Blackfriars, on Tuesday in Whitsun Week, June 8, 1802, before the Society for Missions to Africa and the East, instituted by Members of the Established Church, being their Second Anniversary.* By the Rev. CHARLES SIMEON, M. A. Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. Also, *The Report of the Committee to the Annual Meeting, held on the same day.* pp. 51. 8vo. 1s. Seely, Hatchard, London, 1802.

THE institution which occasioned this Sermon, is but of recent establishment, as our readers will perceive by the title page of the discourse.* The deplorable state of those vast tracts of country which have not yet been blessed with the light of the Gospel, has induced a number of our fellow subjects in the communion of the Church of England, to add another society to those already formed, for the propagation of Christianity among heathen nations. The benevolent Christian must rejoice in the increase of such associations, and in observing the zeal which prevails among different denominations of people, to impart that treasure, from which they derive their best hopes and consolations, to those who have hitherto been destitute of it.

Notwithstanding what has been heretofore done for the accomplishment of this great end, a very large portion of the habitable globe is still lying under the darkness of Pagan or Mahometan error. The whole continent of Africa, and the greatest part of that of Asia, are still without any means of obtaining the knowledge of pure Christianity. Here, therefore, there is an ample field for missionary undertakings; and to this field, the Society before whom Mr. Simeon's Sermon was preached, directs its principal attention.

In order to obviate the difficulties which lie in the way of employing missionaries who are episcopally ordained, the members of this society have, with

great propriety, had recourse to the expedient of sending "Missionaries in the capacity of *Catechists* only, where persons already in holy orders do not offer themselves, or circumstances do not justify any application for regular ordination."

In the appointment of labourers of this description, they are sanctioned by the most respectable example: "The SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, having selected some of the ablest of their converts, and employed them as *Catechists*, with singular benefit to the Christian cause." When Missionaries, in the capacity of *Catechists*, shall have approved themselves worthy of a higher trust, the Society reserves to itself the right of considering the expediency of an application for their being episcopally ordained.†

Such are the outlines of the institution, for which the Sermon before us was preached. The Text, which is happily chosen, Phil. ii. 5—8. furnished the preacher with the most persuasive arguments in favour of missions. Of these, we think, he has judiciously

† See a pamphlet, entitled, "An Account of a Society for Missions to Africa and the East." Sold by Hatchard, Piccadilly, containing the first anniversary sermon preached before the Society. This Sermon, which was delivered by the Rev. Thomas Scott, it was our intention to have reviewed at an early period of our labours, but circumstances have prevented our doing so, till it is now too late formally to introduce it. We very willingly, however, take this opportunity of bearing our unequivocal testimony in favour of its superior merit. The principal object of the Author of it is, to prove the obligation we are under, as Christians, to labour to convert the heathen nations to the faith of Christ; and to obviate the objections which are urged against such attempts. In this object he has completely succeeded. His vindication of missionary undertakings is able and convincing; and if any one should read this Sermon, and still object to them, or refuse to concur in promoting them, we conceive it can only be because he is not willing to submit implicitly to the authority of the Bible, which Mr. Scott adduces, in a most satisfactory manner, in support of his views of the subject. In Mr. Scott's affecting picture of the state of the heathen world, we think it right to say, that we met with one sentiment, (p. 38,) to which we a little hesitated in acceding, at least without some small qualification.

* See also *Christian Observer*, No. I. p. 51, for a short account of it.

availed himself; though on such an occasion, and with such a subject, we must own that we expected greater proofs of care and labour than are to be found in this Sermon. The division is neat, and such as the text naturally suggested; the two following points of consideration being drawn from it, namely, the important fact which it states, and the pattern it recommends.

Mr. Simeon has dwelt chiefly on the second head of the discourse; but being sensible that that must derive its force principally from the consideration of the exalted character of him who has set us the pattern, his equality with the Father is explicitly stated, and confirmed by some decisive quotations from Scripture. The author then proceeds briefly to consider the humiliation of the Son of God, in assuming our nature with all its innocent infirmities, and in submitting to the death of the cross, for the expiation of our guilt.

The powerful motives which this wonderful fact furnishes, to influence our conduct towards each other, apply with peculiar force to such cases as have the everlasting interests of mankind for their object. Mr. Simeon, therefore, proceeds to set before his hearers the obligation, under which a Christian is laid by his Saviour's example, to compassionate the state of the heathen world; and to be willing to make self-denying exertions, and to submit to privations, and even to suffering, in order to promote the everlasting interests of his fellow-creatures.

To enforce these duties, Mr. Simeon endeavours, and with effect, strongly to impress upon the mind what would have been the condition of the whole world, had not the Son of God interposed to save us. He exhorts us, likewise, to consider how greatly we are indebted to the benevolence of our fellow-creatures, for the knowledge of salvation. In pursuing this thought, the preacher has, with great address, adverted to the zeal of that Missionary who first visited our island.

"We forbear," says Mr. Simeon, "to notice the kindness of the Apostles, we will rather advert to an instance more immediately parallel to our own case. For many centuries

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after Christianity was promulged, our ancestors were bowing down to stocks and stones; as we ourselves also should have been, had not some pious Christian come, at the peril of his life, to bring us the glad tidings of salvation. Suppose he had argued, as we are apt to do, 'What can I do among that savage race? There are people enough of my own country to occupy all my care; and I may fulfil my duty to God among them, without encountering all the difficulties, and exposing myself to the dangers, which I must expect to meet with in such an undertaking.' How awful, in that case, would have been our present condition! O Christians! think of all that you enjoy in Christ Jesus, your present consolations, your future prospects; think of these things, and say, 'I owe all, under God, to him who first set his foot on our inhospitable shores, to shew unto us the way of salvation: his example stimulated others; and thus 'the handful of corn that was scattered on the tops of the mountains, has grown up like the woods of Lebanon, or the piles of grass upon the earth.' Blessed, for ever blessed, be God for his labours of love! Who can tell then what may arise from the labours of one society, or even of a single individual! We may not see very extensive benefits in our day: and probably this was the case with respect to him who first visited Britain. But could he now behold from heaven the fruit of his labours, how would he rejoice! Would he think that he had exercised too much self-denial, or patience, or diligence in the cause of God? Would he repent of his exertions? Would he not rather repent that he had not stepped forward sooner, and been more earnest in this blessed work? Be ye then in earnest, my beloved brethren." (p. 130, 131.)

Our Saviour's favourable acceptance of every endeavour to extend his Gospel, and the absolute necessity of our having within us the same mind, which was also in Christ Jesus, are the remaining considerations by which the preacher endeavours to excite his hearers to contribute to this excellent institution.

The Report annexed to the Sermon, has already been inserted in our work, (see No. VIII. p. 540,) which supercedes the necessity of our giving any account of it in this place.

The pages of this pamphlet are made to follow in succession those of the first Anniversary Sermon and Report, an arrangement which we are informed is to be continued in the future publications of the Society, till the number is sufficient to form a volume. We much approve of this method; and we trust that the series will in time furnish an

useful body of instruction, for the assistance of those, who, either as Directors or as Missionaries, may be engaged in the propagation of the Gospel.

May the blessing of the great Head of the Church, attend and prosper all such pious undertakings!

LXV *The Evidence and Design of Christianity considered, in a Letter to a Gentleman.* London, Rivingtons and Hatchard. 1801. pp. 58.

CHRISTIANS in every part of Europe have seen, with mingled emotions of sorrow and alarm, the rapid increase which infidelity has made in a period of short duration. Writers of distinguished reputation, have laudably exerted their talents in counteracting this fatal delusion, and in defending, with all the force of evidence and argument, the holy religion of Christ. Their labours have been useful; but they cannot prevent falsehood from being repeated after it has been exposed, or give patient investigation to those, who would have been too indolent to disbelieve, did not conceit prompt them to object. Still the defenders of Christianity must persevere, if they mean not to yield mankind a willing prey to him who deceiveth the whole world. Their defences, corresponding to the peculiar objections that are to be answered, will either be elaborate, or popular, or unite the advantages of an appeal to the understanding and the heart. The Rev. Mr. Bean, who has avowed himself the author of this letter, writes to those who are rather doubtful of the truth of revealed religion, than prejudiced against it; his arguments, therefore, are more adapted to satisfy ingenuous minds, than to convince those who will not concede any thing, except to the severity of logical argumentation.

The rapid propagation of Christianity by poor, plain men, without any secular advantages, he thinks, attests a divine interposition in its favour.

"To what must we ascribe the success of such instruments? Was there any of that fascination in their religious assemblies, which attends a pompous worship? Did the arts assist the cause, by raising magnificent structures for the performance of their rites; by

clothing the officiating ministers in costly habits; by filling the air with fragrant odours; and touching the soul with the dissolving strains of music? From such attractions their religion derived nothing: nay, it had to contend against their influence; for pagan worship had them all, in as high a degree of improvement, as they had then attained. In the Christian assembly, poverty prevented embellishment. No artificial impression was likely to be felt. Instead of a captivating magnificence, all was plainness: the humble Pastor rehearsing, in simple language, the life and death of his Saviour; exhorting his listening flock to Christian practice; or pouring forth to God his artless prayer" (p. 11, 12)

The objection which naturally arises, that Mahometanism had been propagated even with greater celerity than Christianity, had been before stated. "It requires no miracle," Mr. B. adds, "to account for the reception of that kind of religion which people must submit to, in order to save their lives." (p. 10.) This idea, that the Mahometan faith was spread by the sword *only*, however common, is not altogether just. Bad as that imposture is, it was, perhaps, better than the stupid idolatry of heathenism, or the base corruption of Christianity inflated with pomp, pagantry, and pagan ceremonies, which almost universally prevailed in the eastern empire during the seventh century; and multitudes, who entertained no fear for their lives, readily embraced it as a considerable reformation. It certainly swept away many pollutions of the Christian Church, whose real members it more closely united; and possibly it may prove to be a pioneer for facilitating, in some future period, the progress of that pure religion which is to cover the face of the earth. The sword, indeed, produced its effect; but many concurring circumstances were necessary to render that effect permanent.

On the western coast of Africa, the Mahometan religion has been widely extended, by means of schools for the instruction of youth, and in scarcely any instance by force of arms.

In producing the direct evidence for Christianity, the author briefly, yet clearly, explains the four rules given by Leslie, in his unanswerable tract—"The Short Method with the Deists;" and then proceeds to describe the inte-

resting process, by which his own mind obtained an entire conviction of the truth and excellence of revealed religion. Lest, however, the reader should suppose, that powers of reasoning are alone sufficient to form a Christian, some important observations are made respecting the disposition of mind, which is necessary to render this inquiry productive of real advantage. The pleader may be anxious to establish a point of law, that he may increase his fund of certain knowledge; but his client, to the same desire, adds a strong feeling of interest.

"But permit me to observe, that it is necessary that you enter upon this examination with something more than merely a capacity to weigh arguments against each other. Have you any concern of mind on the subject of religion? Have you any serious desire to know where the truth lies? If you bring this state of mind with you to the inquiry, I have no doubt that, in due time, you will not only be convinced of the truth of the Christian Religion, but be filled with admiration at its excellence. Without such a concern, I must confess to you, that I should have little hope of your arriving at any steadfast belief in the Gospel. It is much to be doubted, whether you would persevere sufficiently in that patient investigation, which, through the ingenious subterfuges of infidelity, may be called for in the search after truth. But if with a mind little interested in the subject, you could be made to pursue the inquiry to its conclusion—What then? All that could be expected of you would be, to hear you own that infidelity cannot be defended. If your heart still remained in a state of indifference toward God, the great purpose of the Gospel Revelation would still be unaccomplished in you. The system might be adopted; but it would have no influence. You would believe it; but you would live as if you believed it not. Where Christianity has no moral influence, it confers no benefit on the professor." (p. 26—28.)

To unfold the design of Christianity is the intention of the remainder of the letter. And if to explain the most important doctrines with perspicuity, to answer weighty objections with candour, and to compress much just thought within narrow limits, deserve any praise—that praise is most certainly due to Mr. Bean. He has furnished an excellent manual for youth, who are exposed to the assault of infidel principles; but which may be read with advantage by the Christian for the ex-

perience which it evinces of real religion, by the unbeliever for its arguments, and by the man of taste for its simple pathos.

We shall close our review with one more extract, which we think well worthy the serious consideration of all who are disposed to doubt or disregard the authority of the Bible. Mr. Bean, after noticing the prospect enjoyed by the Christian, of attaining hereafter to a perfect conformity to the will of God, thus addresses his correspondent.

"Have you any such prospect? Does scepticism shed any cheerful light upon your path? Do you feel it has any correcting or consoling influence? But let me not weary you with expostulation. There is one interesting consideration I will lay before you, and then retire. It is this; we who believe Christianity go upon surer ground than you who reject it.

"Christianity states the consequences of its rejection. This circumstance imperiously obliges us to examine its claims. Here is a scheme professing itself to come from God, for the benefit of men; demanding to be received as the rule of life; and declaring, that if it be rejected, misery in a future state will be the consequence. Now it lies upon you who do not receive it, to prove the whole to be a fallacy. Because, if it be true, you are in the greatest danger; whereas we, even if it prove false, shall be no losers by believing it; especially in times like the present, when no material inconvenience attaches to the avowal of our belief. The enjoyments of this life are your objects; our religion does not disqualify us for them. By the prudence, temperance, and industry which it inculcates, we are as likely to succeed in this world as you. Here therefore you have no advantage over us. Our faith, indeed, may hinder our rising to eminence, but does not deprive us of the comforts of life: and all the peace of mind it imparts to us, is so much over and above the share we may possess in common with you of the goods of this world. Our religion brings a glorious immortality into our prospect; with the hope of this, we are refreshed under the labours of life, and supported in those trials of which we partake with the rest of our fellow creatures. Thus pursuing the duties of our vocation, our religion sheds a serene light upon us in the evening of life, and enables us to close our eyes in peace, in charity, and in hope,—and then to bliss eternal! What infinite gainers are we by Christianity if true!—But what becomes of you? How shall you answer to the great God for your disregard of his authority, your neglect of his gracious counsel, your not applying talents which qualified you for arriving at the knowledge of his will, to any such purpose? If all the reasons on which we act be fallacious, they have done no hurt, either

to ourselves or others; nor have you gained any thing by disregarding them, that we have lost. But if true—we are saved, and you perish!

“See then, what stands at the foot of the account, on either supposition; and let the conclusion have its due weight with you. You

have opportunity to inform yourself; but let me remind you of the short space allotted to some, for the acquisition of knowledge. Uncertain whether your term may not suddenly close, take heed that procrastination do not deprive you of what yet remains of a limited and precarious life.” (p. 51—64.)

REVIEW OF REVIEWS, &c. &c.

THE two following letters are directed to the cure of the same evil, an evil which we deem to be highly pernicious; and we give them publicity, in the hope that they may not be without their effect, in diminishing the frequency of its recurrence.

To the Editor of the *Christian Observer*.

SIR,

PERCEIVING that you have occasionally censured the heterodoxy of several of the *Reviews*, and being persuaded that since you oppose bad doctrine, you will be disposed to find, at least, equal fault with bad practice, I have to request that you will notice an evil habit, and, I fear, a growing one, which prevails among some of our periodical publications, I mean that of quoting the oaths and profane expressions which are to be found in the works they review.

There are, perhaps, few clearer indications of the existence of infidelity in the heart, than a light mode of treating whatsoever is most solemn in religion, and a habit of making profane mention of the name of that being, who ought to be the great object of our reverence.

I profess, Mr. Editor, to feel much dislike to the playhouse, on account of those profane, as well as indecent, expressions which occur in many of its pieces; and I have often been astonished that grave reviewers, who seem to be zealous on the side of general religion and morality, should be so insensible to this great objection to the theatre. For my own part, Sir, it is one of my great objects in life to prevent my children, (for I am the father of a large family), from having their reverence for their God and Saviour, and for all the awful realities of a future world, diminished by their being accustomed to hear these subjects trifled with. I nevertheless take in some periodical publications, from a desire of rendering

my family acquainted with what is passing in the world. I endeavour to counteract, by my own remarks, the erroneous sentiments on religion, which some of these works contain; and I sometimes attempt to shew the connection between unsound tenets, and irreligious practice, by pointing to the profaneness so readily admitted into the works of those moralists, against whom I wish my children to be on their guard; and therefore I admit, that the practical evil, of which I complain, occasionally supplies an argument which is not without its use. The mischief, however, is a very serious one, for I am well persuaded, that the general cause of irreligion and infidelity is exceedingly promoted, by giving to profane oaths that additional credit which they derive from being introduced plainly into print; and I feel an anxious wish, that the *Christian Observer* may be the means of checking, by its strictures, impiety of every sort.

The periodical publication which has suggested these remarks, is the *Monthly Review* for November last. It is a work of considerable ability, and, in that respect, entitled to the reputation which it possesses. The particular passage in that *Review*, to which I allude, is its quotation at the 323d page, from the *Comedy* of “*Folly as it Flies*.” In giving the character of the piece in question, the reviewer observes, that it is “lively and desultory,” that it is like the other pieces of the same author; and that it has the same relation to a regular play, which a japan tea-board bears to a picture; remarks, I doubt not, sufficiently just and appropriate. Not one syllable, however, is said to the prejudice of the play on the ground of its abounding in profane oaths; on the contrary, part of a scene is quoted, with apparently unqualified approbation, in which several profane expressions, and some coarse oaths

are introduced, without even the ordinary caution of inserting only the initials of the objectionable words. I select this instance to illustrate my remarks, not because it is more reprehensible than many quotations which have, at different times, appeared, without any mark of disapprobation, in the same work; but because it is recent.

I am aware, indeed, that oaths may be said to be so common an embellishment of speech, that they are almost necessary, in order to render playhouse dialogue easy and natural; and that it is the object of the theatre to describe the existing manners. I shall only reply, that the multitudes who use, as well as those who countenance, this kind of language, will find it difficult to prove their respect either for the precept of Christ on this subject, or for the following nearly similar injunction of his apostle. "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay nay, lest ye fall into condemnation." S. P.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

SIR,

HAVING observed, that a review of reviews forms one part of the plan of the Christian Observer, I take the liberty of troubling you with a few remarks on this difficult, but not the least useful or important, branch of your undertaking.

Several kinds of danger appear to me to assail you. There is reason to fear lest, through tenderness for publications deemed friendly to your own, you should keep silence when some occasion calls for your interference; lest also, through prejudice against those which are unfriendly, you should be too ready to give an unfavourable construction of their meaning. There is also no small danger, lest even the fairest exercise of your censorial right should give to your work too much of a magisterial air, and should communicate to your readers a habit, not so much of suspecting or examining themselves, as of criticising others.

I hope, Mr. Editor, that it will be your plan occasionally to find fault with

errors on all sides; that you will, nevertheless, sparingly indulge in the censure of rival publications; and moreover, that you will yourself sometimes experience a little of the pain of being reprehended, for I am persuaded that anonymous periodical publications peculiarly need that check, which arises from their being known to have a constant eye upon each other.

I trust, that after this exordium, I shall not be suspected of any improper wish to lower the general credit of the British Critic, if I offer a brief observation on something in its last number, which appears to me very objectionable.

I consider that work as undertaken by persons who are members of the Church of England, and professedly religious, and I respect it, because I am myself a Churchman, and because, moreover, it appears to me to be conducted in a good temper. Surely then I have a right to expect, that it shall be preserved free from every thing which borders on profaneness. I particularly allude to the review in the British Critic for November, (p. 655), of a ballad, entitled, "The Scum uppermost when the Middlesex Porridge-pot boils over." From "this humorous trifle," as it is, I doubt not, justly called, the reviewer has chosed to extract a passage, with which, in my opinion, he ought on no account to have stained his pages. It is a passage in which his *Satanic Majesty*, to use the reviewer's expression, is introduced as the partizan of a certain Baronet, with such profane levity as must be highly offensive to every pious mind. I will not dwell on the fault, of which I conceive the British Critic to have been guilty, in relating this particular part of the ballad in question, as a specimen of talents which they say "are constantly employed in the support of social order and established government," and not, at the same time, proceeding to censure its profaneness, further than to say, that I suspect the cause of that evil spirit, against whose "wiles" our Church teaches us to pray, can by few means be more effectually served than by turning his agency into a subject of merriment in ballads; and by introducing that aw-

ful place of punishment for the wicked, which the Scriptures endeavour to render the object of our serious terror, as an imaginary scene which is fitted to excite our mirth and divert our fancy. It appears to me, Sir, that wit of this sort is one of the best engines of infidelity, and is much more likely to serve the cause which it is employed to attack, than that which it professes to defend.

A. B.

THE following letter is only one of many of a similar description with which we have been favoured, and which our desire of cultivating peace has induced us to suppress. Finding however, that our forbearance has been so far misunderstood, as to be construed into a tacit acknowledgment of the strength of the reasoning contained in these letters, we have judged it prudent to give publicity to one of them, which, we can assure our readers, furnishes a *favourable* specimen both of the temper and arguments of our assailants; being upon the whole, at least, as moderate as any we have received, and certainly more ably written.

To the Committee of the Observer.

GENTLEMEN,

THE following letter is not written with a view of serving any *party*;^{*} but to remind you, and your correspondents, of your professions of candor and good will to others. I hope that *jus-*

tice to those professions will lead you to insert it, in its present state, in your Observer. Sincerely wishing you more divested of a sectarian spirit, and all possible success in the cause of truth and godliness,

I remain,

GENTLEMEN,

Yours, respectfully in the Gospel.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE very liberal way in which you promised to conduct your useful miscellany, cannot fail of exciting attention and regard. "To avoid every thing that may tend to lessen Christian love, and to admit nothing *harsh* nor intemperate towards any sect of Christians, &c." are sentiments that will ensure the approbation of every good man, whether he be a conformist or non-conformist.

Now, Sir, permit me to say, that being a constant reader of your Observer, I am in the habit of *observing* how your *professions* and your *practice*, your *cover* and *contents*, agree, or clash, with each other. And here I must say, it has pained me repeatedly to remark, that there appears an irreconcilable inconsistency. If I have any "Christian love," it has been wounded and "lessened" by your ungenerous remarks on Dissenters. I allude to several of your correspondents, besides the illiberal and unmanly attack of W. R.†

* It will be seen how well the *professions* and *practice*, the *cover* and *contents*, of SECTARIUS PACIFICUS agree.

† There are few things so calculated to impose on superficial thinkers, as that indiscriminating *cant* of charity, which characterizes the present day. On this subject, therefore, we beg leave to make a few observations.

It will be readily allowed in the first place, that whenever a bare statement of *facts* appears *harsh*, and wears the colour of invective, the narrator ought not to be blamed, (when duty requires him to state the facts), even though he should happen to wound the *charity* of the person who may be implicated in it. It will also be allowed that self-defence, and all those measures of repelling, pursuing and disarming an enemy, which self-defence may require, are perfectly consistent with *charity*. If these general principles are kept in mind, they will obviate much misconception on this subject.

But how stands the present case? The con-

ductors of the *Christian Observer*, attached to the Church of England, because they conceive her doctrines and government to be agreeable to the apostolical institutions, and because they regard her establishment as the chief instrument which God has pleased to employ for maintaining, in this country, the cause of true religion; feel it their duty to watch the proceedings of those who may be unfriendly to her interests. Let it not be understood that we wish to involve Dissenters, generally, in this imputation. Very far from it. But shall we be deemed *uncharitable*, if we cannot exempt from it, either SECTARIUS PACIFICUS, or those, be they many or few, who concur in his views? He, as will be seen, deems the Church of England to be a *main* branch of *Antichrist*. If, under these circumstances, he does not wish her downfall, and both pray and labour to effect it, we should think him neither sincere nor consistent. Giving perfect credit, however, to him and to those who entertain similar sentiments with him, for sincerity

However, waiving many things, I now wish to recal your attention, to the review of Owen's Methodism unmasked, in your number for July. I was much surprised you should have brought forward so contemptible a pamphlet; and concerning which, you can pay the author not the *shadow* of a compliment.† Would it not have been better to have consigned this "*coercive*" piece to the isle from whence it came? And if some *coercive* gust of wind had blown it overboard, where would have been the in-

jury sustained, either by Church or State? The author's tears might have flown most plentifully: but I suspect that your reviewer himself would not have shed *one* tear of commiseration. Yet I think I can discern the reason of publishing that review. Though your reviewer speaks against the author's main design, "*coercion*," his object was to aim a blow at the Dissenters. It is the multiplication of dissenting places of worship, that gives him the alarm, *Ibi opprimitur calceus*.‡

ty and consistency in this particular, it ought not to excite any surprise, that we should feel *alarm* at their progress, and should wish to see it obstructed, not by measures incompatible with *Christian love* or religious liberty, but by an increase of holy zeal, activity, and watchfulness on the part of the appointed pastors of the people, and a care on the part of government to provide ample means of instruction in religious truth for every part of the kingdom. On what ground is it deemed *uncharitable* in us, to wish that every new place of worship erected in the land, were an episcopal Church or Chapel, occupied by a zealous and laborious clergyman, instead of a dissenting meeting-house?

Let us now illustrate the principles we have laid down by an example. Some Dissenters thought it right, not long ago, to republish and disperse, with great assiduity, "*Dr. Gill's Reasons for separating from the Church of England*," a work which it would not be very uncharitable to presume to have been republished with the view of serving a party, and promoting dissent from the Church. This book was answered by Mr. Hart, of Bristol, with great temper, but at the same time so satisfactorily, that many, especially of those who were concerned in editing it, we doubt not, felt what, in common with *SECTARIUS PACIFICUS*, they would call their *Christian love*, wounded by it. But was Mr. Hart, therefore, guilty of a breach of *charity*? Did not its violation rather attach to those who were the aggressors?

W. R. since the appearance of his first letter (*Christian Observer*, p. 161.), has been made the object of frequent attack. *SECTARIUS PACIFICUS* considers him as uncharitable, ungenerous, unmanly, and illiberal. It is not our present object to discuss his merits or to undertake his defence. But may we not ask, whether this advocate for *Christian love* could have made no supposition which should greatly have softened the harshness of these epithets? Let us state the possible case. W. R. let it be supposed, a supposition to which *charity* cannot object, is a pious, laborious, and useful minister of the Church of England, who has been made the instrument of turning many to righteousness, and whose crowded

Church and harmonious parish evidence the efficacy of his ministry. Let it further be supposed, and this may also be done without any breach of *charity*, that after years thus passed, some itinerating preachers found their way into his parish, and by their conversation in private, their discourses in public, and, perhaps, by the plentiful distribution of the *Reasons of Dr. Gill*, or of some sermons which we could name, converted the peace and unity of the parish into division and discord, until, at length, order is disregarded and trampled on; pride and conceit take place of humility and a teachable spirit; the pastor, under whom the people had flourished, is regarded by many as dark and ignorant; the Church itself is deemed a relic of popery; and the prevailing respect for the constituted authorities, perhaps, greatly lessened. Shall we load W. R. with harsh epithets, because he does not view this unhappy change with perfect composure? or shall we call him unmanly and illiberal, if, under these circumstances, and having known one or two, or, perhaps, twenty similar instances, he should form a conclusion to the prejudice of Dissenters in general? We cannot approve of indiscriminate censure, but we are of opinion, that one who undertakes professedly the cause of *charity*, might have framed some such excuse for W. R.

We would here remind our readers of the principle laid down at the beginning of this note, with respect to the statement of *facts*. We mean not to impeach any one's motives: they may be perfectly pure even in cases where the proceedings to which they lead are highly pernicious; neither do we mean to make any *general* application of the case which we have supposed. That in *some* instances it will be found to apply, will scarcely be denied.

† Would *SECTARIUS PACIFICUS* then have us to review nothing which we cannot praise? the adoption of such a principle would, no doubt, have been convenient. It would have secured his own letter from all annotation.

‡ Allowing the representation of *SECTARIUS PACIFICUS* to be accurate, there is certainly nothing in his letter to diminish our alarm. We cannot possibly be consistent members of the Church of England, and yet

Your reviewer, Sir, believes, that the increase of Dissenters leads them "to wish for a change in the ecclesiastical, and perhaps, even of the civil government,"* and that "from the features of their Church government, a tincture may be given to their opinions respecting civil government." And though he pays a few individuals a compliment, and offers some circumstances in favour of "the general body," he returns to his point, "with which he set out," and again, in almost the same language, charges them with having the latent seeds of disaffection. If these reflections do *not tend* to "lessen that Christian love, that ought to unite the members of Christ, I am at a loss to conceive what *can* do it." These insinuations would have become the most violent member of Mr. Reeve's association, at the time when every Dissenter was a suspected and marked character; but every way unbecoming a Christian reviewer, now the storm is over. As that gentleman is assuming, allow me to be *positive* in denying, in the most *express manner*, what he has advanced. I call upon him, out of regard to the ecclesiastical and civil government, to *establish* his charge; or in the name of every thing honest, and becoming a Christian, to retract it.†

In the mean time, give me leave, Sir, to state my opinion of the general body of Dissenters. We believe that the Church of Christ was first established, not by the *aid* of civil power, but in *opposition* to it; that is, not against the *principles* of civil government, but against the *inclinations* of the then existing potentates. It never sought the secular arm to *uphold* it; it never required its *officious* services. (a) We feel complacency in the increase of those who regard her as a *main branch* of *antichrist*.

* This is a misrepresentation of the passage alluded to, as may be seen by comparing them together. (See Christian Observer, p. 447.)

† What we said upon the subject was no more than general reasoning, and contained no *charge* against Dissenters. But if we had preferred any *charge* of hostility to the Establishment against them, the letter of *SECTARIUS PACIFICUS* would furnish us with a convenient opportunity of substantiating it, at least in one instance.

(a) This reminds me of a simile Sir G. Saville once made in the House of Commons,

believe Christianity recommends to government a free toleration to *all* its subjects, without distinction; and requires of them a conscientious submission 'to the powers that be.' Receiving that free toleration, we are satisfied with our freedom, and candidly, and sometimes *humanely*, wish others might enjoy the same liberty. But if our brethren are happy with what we conceive would be a bondage to us, we are content, and bid them God speed. We are not unfriendly to the ecclesiastical system, because we do not touch nor handle those ordinances, which are after the commandments and doctrines of men: nor do we wish to change the minds of our conforming brethren, who are *perfectly satisfied*.* We do not aim at subverting the Establishment, though, as a *cause* of our dissent, we believe that, with all its excellences, it is a *main branch* of the *anti-christian system*.† But our exertions are directed another way. We leave the Church to stand, or fall, as it may; and, adopting Gamaliel's advice on another occasion,‡ "Refrain from these men," &c.

when speaking of the *utility* of establishments: "So have I seen a number of *mole*s throwing up their *little* hillocks of earth around a majestic edifice. 'What are you doing?' said a spectator. 'We are raising mounds of earth,' (said the *blind* animals) 'to defend and support that noble building!!'"||

* We commend the prudence of *SECTARIUS PACIFICUS*, in confining his attempts at proselytism to those whose *perfect satisfaction* with the establishment, has been previously impaired.

† We wish our readers particularly to mark this passage. We have already commented upon it

‡ One would be led to fancy by this allusion, that the Church of England was some body of recent separatists, who, by their schism, had disturbed the peace of the Church.

|| The weakness of this reasoning is too palpable to require being exposed. No one will deny that the Almighty may accomplish his purposes without the intervention of governments, or any other human agency. But is it his ordinary method of proceeding to do so? Was not the *secular arm* made singularly instrumental in promoting the reformation? And does not *SECTARIUS PACIFICUS* owe to it the right, if he chooses to exercise it, of publicly exposing, either by himself or his itinerants, what he deems the *anti-christian* abominations of the Church of England.

Acts v. 38, 9. we intrench ourselves in our own ground, save only when we go forth, with our itinerants, to attack the common enemy, the god of this world.

We certainly have no *tincture* in our *discipline* that inclines us to seek a change in the civil government. We do not indulge the spirit of equality and independence. Our ministers, elders, deacons, exhorters, &c. all know their places; and all things are done for the 'use of edifying, that brotherly love may continue.' And here I might remind your reviewer, that if Scripture authority is to be regarded, respecting discipline, we conform to it *more exactly* than the Church of England possibly can.*

With another gentleman, (see Christ. Observ. p. 471) 'we are far from undervaluing the benefits of a wise and temperate reform;' but then we would be wise and temperate in *obtaining* it. Let the *silence* of the general body of Dissenters, in reference to petitions, during the late war, prove the assertion. As we are not, then, Democrats, nor Jacobins, in our church government, we cannot be *systematic* enemies to our civil constitution.† We know our privileges; we prize them; and we bless God for them. I could name several dissenting ministers, whose compliance with the precepts of Scripture, relative to civil government, I should not be afraid to oppose to that of any evangelical clergyman in the kingdom. It might, possibly, put many of them to the *blush*.

I would recommend your reviewer, indeed many of your correspondents, to go occasionally to *hear* the Dissenters preach, and visit them at their own houses; and I am persuaded the candour, the talents, and piety of numbers of that injured body, would astonish them, and command their reverence and esteem.‡

* See the Epistle of Clemens Romanus, p. 764, of this number.

† We made no such assertions, nor was it even in our intention to make them.

‡ We assure SECTARIUS PACIFICUS, that we have long been convinced of the candour, talents, piety, and usefulness, of many Dissenters, whom we cordially reverence and esteem; although we cannot compliment

Christ. Observ. No. 12.

Yet, Mr. Editor. your reviewer acknowledges that the *origin* of the evil of which he complains, 'has its foundation in the *constitution* of *human nature*.*' If so, who are so *likely* to wish for a change in our ecclesiastical, and from that to the civil code, as those who are in the *fetters* of the Establishment.† And have not the *majority* of complainants against both, been members of the Established Church?‡ The Dissenters are free from ecclesiastical bonds: they *need* not, they *ought* not to complain.§ But if this evil have its foundation in human nature; (and not amongst Dissenters *merely*;) and if human nature, in general, dislike *all* government, then, the more *heavy* the *burden*, the *stronger* the wish for a *change*.

But, perhaps, many of the members of the Establishment have a kindred disposition to a certain animal, of whom it is said, the *more* he is loaded, so much the *more steadily* will he carry his burden.|| *Nolens ipse esse asinus*, I leave your reviewer to apply the simile, and remain,

Mr. Editor,

Yours sincerely,

SECTARIUS PACIFICUS.

them, nor will they expect that we should, on account of what we deem their errors. We believe that few, if any, of this description, will much approve of either the language or the sentiments of SECTARIUS PACIFICUS.

* This is another misrepresentation of our meaning.

† What is meant by the *fetters* of the Establishment? When disaffection to the Church has been once produced, the *ecclesiastical bonds* will, no doubt, be as clearly seen, and as sensibly felt as the tyranny of our civil government was by the members of the Corresponding Society. But is the existence of *fetters*, in the one case, more than tyranny in the other, proved by disaffection?

‡ No.

§ But have they not complained?

|| Had we made all the remarks which occurred to us, we should have swelled this article to an enormous size. We have brought the above letter forward with great reluctance, after we had, in order to avoid dispute, adopted the resolution of suppressing it (for it reached us early in September.) We now publish it partly to save ourselves from an inundation of similar communications, and partly to vindicate the Christian Observer from the charges of uncharitableness and bigotry which have been so confidently preferred.

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE, &c. &c.

GREAT BRITAIN.

Mr. Gifford's *History of France*, from the earliest times to the death of Louis the XVth, forms four large volumes in 4to; and is embellished with portraits of the sovereigns, and other distinguished characters, and with historical plates. The first part of the first volume of the continuation of this work, or the History of France, from the accession of Louis the XVth, to the peace of 1802, will be published next spring.

A general ASSOCIATION OF THE BOOK-SELLERS, throughout the united kingdom, has been formed for the purpose of establishing and supporting a new *daily Morning*, and a new *daily Evening Newspaper*, to begin on the 1st of January, 1803; in which particular attention will be paid to literary subjects.

A work on *practical Agriculture*, by Dr. Dickson, illustrated by about fifty copper-plates, will appear early in the next year.

M. Peltier has published, in London, a French edition of Denon's Travels in Egypt; containing, besides the work of Denon, a Selection of Memoirs upon different parts of Egypt, with plates. The price is six guineas; and upon superfine paper, with first impressions, nine guineas.

Six other Letters to Granville Sharp, Esq. on the use of the definitive article in the Greek Text of the New Testament, are in the press.

Captain Walsh, of the 95th regiment and aid-du-camp to Sir Eyre Coote, has in the press, in 1 vol. 4to, illustrated by numerous engravings, *A detailed Journal of the late Campaign in Egypt*; including descriptions of Gibraltar, Minorca, Malta, and Egypt.

A translation from the Greek is announced, of the learned work of Eusebius Pamphilius, Bishop of Cæsarea, in Palestine, on the *Preparation for the spreading of the Gospel*. It will be published in monthly numbers, at one shilling and six pence each.

A new weekly publication, entitled *The Literary Journal*, will commence on the 6th of January; and will be continued every Thursday, price one shilling.

A new and complete Collection of modern *Voyages and Travels*, with engravings, is now publishing in monthly pocket volumes, by Mr. Blagden.

Mr. Greatheed, of Newport Pagnell, has in considerable forwardness a General History

against it. If in doing this we should have wounded the *charity* of any, who are really entitled to the appellation which this letter-writer has assumed, it will give us great concern: and we here protest against any inference which may be drawn from what we have said, to the prejudice of such persons.

of Missions, in which he is assisted by Mr. Burder of Coventry.

On November 30th, being St Andrew's Day, the ROYAL SOCIETY held their Anniversary meeting at their apartments in Somerset-Place; when Sir Godfrey Copley's gold medal was presented to W. Hyde Wollaston, M. D. for his various papers printed in the Philosophical Transactions. Of the old council, were elected for the ensuing year, the Right Honourable Sir Joseph Banks, Bart. K. B. Sir C. Blagden, Knt. H. Cavendish, Esq. Edward Whitaker Gray, M. D. Right Honourable C. Greville, Right Honourable Sir W. Hamilton, K. B. Rev. Nevil Maskelyne, D. D. George Earl of Morton, K. T. Joseph Planta, Esq. Benjamin Count Rumford, and Samuel Wegg, Esq.—Of the new council, Mark Beaufoy, Esq. Andrew Douglas, Esq. Sir M. B. Folkes, Bart. C. Hatchett, Esq. Everard Home, Esq. Thomas Barnard, Esq. Lord Bishop of Limerick, W. Manden, Esq. Jos. de Mendoza Rios, Esq. Francis Earl of Moira, and W. H. Wollaston, M. D.—The officers are, Sir J. Banks, president; W. Manden, Esq. treasurer; Jos. Planta, Esq. and G. W. Gray, M. D. secretaries.

The king's scholars, and the town boys of Westminster School, have presented to Dr. VINCENT, their late head master, the present Dean of Westminster, two pieces of plate, each of the value of 120 guineas, with inscriptions expressive of their esteem and affection, and the high honour with which he had filled the chair.

It is said, that a mixture, consisting of six parts of gold, and one of platina, gives a metal of a beautiful colour, great malleability, and capable of receiving an exceedingly fine polish, and more unalterable than gold, when exposed to the action of sulphurised hydrogen, and other agents.

M. ALDINI, Professor at the Institute of Bologna, and nephew of the celebrated Galvani, after having made his experiments on Galvanism, at the National Institute at Paris, has visited London, and given an accurate account of his experiments and discoveries to the Royal Society. He intends to publish a large work on the subject, in this country, before he returns to Italy. He has established the fact, that the metals are not necessary for the production of the galvanic fluid; and that it is excited, collected, or generated in the bodies of animals, where it acts as the great cause or instrument of muscular motion, sensation, &c. He has succeeded in exciting muscular contractions, by the simple application of the nerves to the muscles of a prepared frog. He has also given motion to the limbs of a small cold-blooded animal, by the gal-

vanic energy of an animal with warm blood; an experiment never before imagined. He repeated these experiments at Oxford; and has shewn by these and other facts, that galvanism is animal electricity, not merely passive, but performing, probably, the most important functions in the animal economy; and it appears not to be confined in its operation to the motion of the muscles, but to be of importance also in the secretions. The stimulus appears from some experiments made upon the bodies of various criminals, who were beheaded at Bologna, to be the most powerful in nature. By means of the pile, M. Aldini excited the vital forces remaining in these bodies, in a most astonishing manner. The most horrible contortions and grimaces were produced by the motions of the muscles of the head and face; and an hour and a quarter after death, the arm of one of these bodies was elevated eight inches from the table on which it was supported, and this even when a considerable weight was placed in the hand. These are not experiments of mere curiosity, but offer very encouraging prospects in the cure of disorders of the head, apoplexies, recovery of the drowned, &c. The application of galvanism in melancholic insanity is absolutely new and very interesting. Two patients at Bologna have been perfectly cured by it; and this fact is the more important, as the present system of physic has so little to offer in this distressing malady.

MR. EZEKIEL WALKER, of LYNN, has communicated, in a letter to Mr. Nicholson, *a method of increasing the quantity of light afforded by candles, and to obviate the necessity of snuffing them.* Common or mould candles, placed in candlesticks made for the purpose, so as to form an angle of thirty degrees with the perpendicular, require no snuffing, and give a steady and uniform light without the least smoke. These effects are thus produced: When a candle burns in an inclined position, most part of the flame rises perpendicularly from the upper side of the wick. As the end of the wick projects beyond the flame, it meets with the air, and is completely burnt to ashes; hence it is rendered incapable of acting as a conductor, to carry off any part of the combustible matter in the form of smoke. By this spontaneous mode of snuffing, that part of the wick which is acted upon by the flame, continues of the same length, and the flame itself very nearly of the same strength and magnitude. The advantages which may be derived from candles that require no snuffing and afford no smoke, may be readily understood; but these candles have another property, which ought to be noticed. A candle snuffed by an instrument, gives a very fluctuating light, which, in viewing near objects, is highly injurious to the eye; and this is an inconvenience which no shade can remove.

But when a candle is snuffed spontaneously it gives a light so perfectly steady and so uniformly bright, that the adjustments of the eye remain at rest, and distinct vision is performed without uneasiness. Any considerable motion of the candle, or agitation of the air, will cause the tallow to run over. See *Nich. Journ.* 8vo. vol. iii. p. 272—275.

In Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, it is a common custom to allow horses no litter, but to let them stand or lie on a raised floor, composed of boards, the joinings of which are left open. Cows and even pigs are likewise housed on similar platforms. The animals are in this way easily kept clean and dry; and to this practice it is, perhaps, owing, that, in those northern countries, a foundered horse is seldom to be seen. In the mode followed in other places, the warm humid compost of dung and litter, seems to have the effect of making the feet tender and liable to disease. The Duke of York is said to have directed, by way of experiment, some barracks to be constructed upon the northern plan.

The Lapland Travellers, Messrs. CRIPPS and CLARKE, of Jesus College, Cambridge, are at length safely returned to this country. The collection formed by these gentlemen is contained in 183 cases, and is, perhaps, the largest ever sent to England; illustrating the natural and moral history of the various people they visited, in a journey from the 67th degree of north latitude to the territories of Circassia, and the shores of the Nile. The botanic part contains the herbage of the celebrated Pallas, enriched by the contributions of Linnæus, and his numerous literary friends. With the minerals, are several new substances, and the rarest productions of the Siberian mines. Among the antiquities are various inscriptions and bas-reliefs, relative to observations made in the plain of Troy, and which were announced by Monsieur Chevalier in France, in the last edition of his work. The medallie series contains several coins of Greece, and of the kings of Parthia, hitherto unknown. The manuscripts are in Hebrew, Coptic, Arabic, Abyssinian, Persian, Turkish, and the language of Thibet, Tartary; and in the Greek and Latin languages are several manuscripts of the classics, of the Gospels, and the writings of the earliest fathers of the Church. In addition to these, the collection contains Greek vases, gems, sculpture, and many remarkable Egyptian monuments from the ruins of the city of Sais, discovered by these travellers in the Delta, after the evacuation of Egypt by the French: Also numerous original drawings, maps, charts, plans, models, and the seeds of many rare and useful plants: the habits, utensils, and idols, of the inhabitants of the Aleutan Isles, brought by Billings to Russia, after his expedition to the countries lying between Kamtschatka and the north-west coast of America.

* * * *We are obliged to postpone the Foreign Literary and Philosophical Intelligence, although much of it is highly interesting.*

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

SERMONS.

A SERMON preached at the Anniversary Meeting of the Clergy, and Sons of the Clergy, in the Cathedral of Bristol, 26th August, 1802. By J. Crofts, A. M.

A Sermon preached in Lambeth Chapel, 27th June, 1802, at the Consecration of the Right Rev George Isaac Huntingford, D. D. Lord Bishop of Gloucester. By the Rev. Wm. Howley, M. A.

Sermons on various Subjects, preached at the Octagon Chapel, Bath. By Rev. J. Gardiner, D. D. 8vo.

THEOLOGY.

No. I. of Eusebius's Preparation for spreading the Gospel. Translated from the Greek. To be completed in 15 numbers.

The Poor Man's Commentary on the Bible. By Dr. Hawker, No. I and II.

The Way to the Sabbath of Rest: or the Soul's Progress in the Work of the New Birth. By T. Bromley.

Whitefield's Hymns, with his Life, and a Supplement. By M. Wilks. New and beautiful Edition, with a Portrait.

The Workhouse; or a Religious Life the only happy One. By the Author of Margaret Whyte.

The Beauty and Benefit of early Piety, represented in Several Sermons to Young People. By David Jennings, D. D. New Edition.

The Beauties of Dr. Young. By J. Evans, A. M.

Christian Gentleman and Tradesman's Pocket Diary; with a Portrait of William Cowper, Esq.

Christian Preacher's Diary; with a Portrait of Mr. Whitefield.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A Bibliographical Dictionary; with Anecdotes, &c. 12mo.

An East India Directory, for 1803. By J. Mathison and Alex. Way Mason.

The Stocks examined and compared, or, a Guide to Purchasers in the Public Funds. By W. Fairman, 8vo.

Moral Education; or, the One Thing Needful. By T. Simons.

The Young Englishman's Manual; in Two Parts: I. A Geographical and Topographical

Description of England. II. A general View of the Constitution, Laws, Government, Revenue, Ecclesiastical, Civil, and Military Establishments of England—Designed as an Introduction to the Knowledge of those important Subjects. By B. Price, 12mo.

Geographia Antiqua: being a complete set of Maps of ancient Geography. Engraved by Cellarius.

Paris Delineated, from the French of Mercier, with a Map of Paris, 2 vols. 8vo.

The Fourth Edition, corrected according to the present Division of the Continent; with an Abstract of Ancient Geography, and the Nature and Use of Maps.—A Short and Easy Introduction to the Science of Geography. By Thomas Keith, 12mo.

The Friendly Adviser, and Juvenile Monitor: being a Series of Examples, intended to correct the Failings, and improve the judgment of Youth. To which are added, Thoughts on the First Principles of Religion, and the great Importance of early Piety. By Sarah Wheatley, 18mo.

The Second Part of the Third Volume of the Reports of the Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor, 12mo.

The Second Part of Vol. V of Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Histoire de la Revolution de France, Seconde et dernière Partie. Par A. F. Bertrand de Moleville, Ministre d'Etat, 5 vols. 8vo.

Brief Memoirs of the Right Hon. Henry Addington's Administration, through the first fifteen Months from its Commencement.

The Progress of Jacobinism, proved from the late General Election. By J. Bowles, Esq.

Les cinq Promesses; Tableau de la Conduite du Gouvernement consulaire envers la France, l'Angleterre, l'Italie, & sur tout envers la Suisse. Par Sir Francis D'Ivernois.

A Journal of the Forces which sailed from the Downs in April, 1800, on a Secret Expedition, under the Command of Major General Pigot, till their arrival in Minorca; and continued through the subsequent Operations of the Army under the Command of the Right Hon Gen. Sir R. Abercrombie, K. B. in the Mediterranean and Egypt, &c. &c. By Eneas Anderson, 4to.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

AMERICA.

WE are happy to observe, that in several parts of America, but particularly in the State of Connecticut, it has pleased God to excite a very unusual degree of zeal for the propagation of religious truth. A Missionary Society has been established in that province, consisting chiefly, if not wholly, of Independents,

who form there what is called *the standing order*. The object at which they have principally aimed, has been to introduce the knowledge of Christianity into those back settlements, where, as yet, no religious institutions have been formed, and where the inhabitants in general are distinguished by their gross ignorance of religion, and their open

profligacy of manners; the few who possess superior information, being for the most part avowed infidels, or professing what may be considered as little less pernicious in its tendency, the doctrine of Universalism.*

In an account of their proceedings, lately published by this Society, we rejoice to find, that very considerable success had attended the labours of their missionaries. The districts in which they had been chiefly employed, were the Western and Northern counties of the State of New York, the Northern part of Vermont, the North West part of Pennsylvania, and the recent settlement called New Connecticut. The readiness and cordiality with which numbers in these regions have embraced the great truths of the Gospel, and the happy effects which seem to have been produced thereby, on their lives and conversation, leave little room to doubt that the divine blessing has very signally attended the labours of the missionaries.

"The fruits," it is observed, "as far as we can judge, have been the effect of that wisdom from above, which is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*" The chief means employed upon the occasion, have been preaching, and conferences. "The preaching," it is said, has been plain. Ministers have dwelt much on experimental religion, and on the great doctrines of grace, such as repentance, faith, the necessity of a new birth, the willingness

* The distinguishing tenet of the Universalists is, that God has decreed that all men shall infallibly be saved.

of God to shew mercy to sinners, the sufficiency of Christ's righteousness; his calls, invitations, and remonstrances; the arguments drawn from the unreasonableness of sin, the pleasures of piety, the shortness of human life, the certainty of death, the solemnity of the grave, the rewards of righteousness, the everlasting misery of the ungodly, and other plain and leading doctrines of the Gospel. They have, also, equally enforced Christian morals as the *only* visible evidence of a state of acceptance."

It is from such a mode of preaching as this, indeed, that good may in all cases be expected, because it is that which is sanctioned by the example of our blessed Lord, and of his Apostles. One general effect of it is stated to be, an attention to the important duty of family religion. In many families, where God was wholly disregarded, the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and praise is now regularly paid; the Bible is carefully studied; and great pains are bestowed on the religious instruction of children.

We are particularly pleased to have met, in the account which has reached us, with few or no symptoms of those extravagances which have attended the revival of religion in Kentucky, and which were particularly noticed in our number for October, p. 670.

The annual expense incurred by the Connecticut Missionary Society, is stated to be no more than 1650 dollars, about 370*l.*; and the report adds, that they were only prevented from extending their labours, both in the states and among the Indians, by the scantiness of their funds.

VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

FRANCE.

THE Military Conscriptions in this country, have given occasion to much dissatisfaction, which broke out in Paris, on one occasion, into open tumult. The consequence was, that a party of Dragoons arriving, ten of the Conscripts were killed, twenty-four wounded, and about as many more sent to gaol. The Conscripts consist of three out of four chosen by lot, of all the young men between twenty and twenty-three years of age, who have not been able to purchase their exemption, by paying about £25 sterling to government. The cir-

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cumstance which renders the present levy particularly unpopular, is the Chief Consul's evidently intending it to recruit his wasted army in St. Domingo, a service to which it cannot be expected that there should prevail any very cordial inclination.

The Helvetic Consulta are assembling at Paris, and are expected to proceed, in no long time, to the fabrication of a New Constitution for Switzerland.

SWITZERLAND

The unhappy Swiss have at length completely sunk under the Powerful pressure of

their conquerors. Their former leaders have been arrested, carried off from them, and put into close confinement; and heavy contributions have been imposed, for the maintenance of the French troops, who are employed in disarming the inhabitants.

GERMANY.

The Imperial Plenipotentiary has not yet acceded to the Definitive Conclusum of the Deputation.

HOLLAND.

In Holland, where commerce is better understood than in France, a number of Merchants have petitioned for the removal of the Prohibition against the Importation of British Woollen Manufactures, well knowing that such restrictions do more injury to the nation, in whose favour they are made, than to that against which they are directed. Government has not yet answered their petition.

TURKEY.

A violent shock of an Earthquake has been experienced at Constantinople, by which considerable damage was done to the buildings in several parts of the city. It was felt nearly about the same time at Moscow, and in different places in the Russian and Turkish dominions.

EAST INDIES.

Five women were lately tried at Patna, in Hindostan, on charges of Sorcery, and being found guilty, were put to death. The Governor General, on being informed of the circumstance, ordered all the principal persons, who composed the tribunals, to be apprehended, and arraigned before the Circuit Court of Patna, on charges of the murder of these women, and the Court adjudged them to suffer death. It appeared, however, that this custom had prevailed time immemorial; several of the witnesses remembered numerous instances of persons having been put to death by the Brahmins for sorcery, and one of them in particular proved that his own mother had been tried and executed as a witch—the government, therefore, pardoned the offenders; but to prevent the recurrence of circumstances so disgraceful to humanity, a proclamation has been issued, declaring that any one forming a tribunal for the trial of persons charged with witchcraft, or aiding or encouraging in any act to deprive such persons of life, shall be deemed guilty of murder, and suffer the penalty attached to that offence.

GREAT BRITAIN.

THE debates which have taken place in the British Parliament constitute the most interesting branch of the politics of the last month. The sentiments of the several parties in this country, on the great subject of the line of conduct which Great Britain ought to pursue in respect to France, has now been fully developed. It appears that not only

AMERICA.

Tom Payne is said to have arrived at New York, in a ship from Havre, on the 5th of October last.

A Society of Deists, comprizing upwards of one hundred persons, is also said to have been formed at the same place, for the purpose of extending their opinions; but whether its institution is connected with Tom Payne's arrival does not appear. Each member is bound, by oath, to serve the order, with "his fortune, his honour, and his blood."

FRENCH WEST INDIES.

Martinique and Tobago have been given up to the French.

The accounts from St. Domingo, which have been published in the French Official Journal, are not so disastrous as those which have reached this country from other quarters. They admit, indeed, that there had been some partial disturbances among the Blacks, and that the fever still prevailed at the Cape with unabated malignity; but they assert that the French force on the island amounted to about 15,000 men, and that the prosperity of the colony was progressive. Letters from Jamaica and America, on the other hand, state, that the French were confined almost entirely to the sea ports; that their communication with the interior was suspended, and with the posts on the coast was carried on by sea; that the troops had been withdrawn from several stations, which they were deemed incompetent to defend, in order to reinforce others which were weakened by disease; that the negroes were, in all quarters, in a state of open insurrection, spreading devastation over the plantations in the neighbourhood of the French troops, from whom they experienced nothing like effectual resistance; and that they were actually preparing to attack some of the forts. There was not, it is added, the least prospect of the restoration of tranquillity in the colony, and its appearance was still more tumultuous than at the commencement of the troubles at the breaking out of the Revolution. Commerce was completely at a stand, and among the merchants nothing was to be seen or heard of but terror and dismay.

GUIANA.

Letters have been received in town, which represent the negroes in the Dutch colonies as being in such a state of insubordination as greatly to alarm the planters.

have the members and supporters of the former administration become divided by our new circumstances, into two directly opposite and contending bodies, but that in the party also of Mr. Fox, a material difference of opinion has arisen. Mr. Fox approves the moderate language of the present administration, but dislikes the high peace

establishment which they have proposed: he conceives the country to be sufficiently safe without it, and urges the most pacific measures.

Mr. Sheridan justifies the mild tone of ministry, because he deems it consistent with even the highest spirit, and at the same time supports the measure of a large establishment. He has even gone as far as Mr. Windham in asserting that Bonaparte meditates hostility against this country. He has represented his one prayer, morning and night, "whether made to Jupiter, to Christ, or to Mahomet," as being put up for our destruction; and he has endeavoured to rouse the country to a sense of its impending danger. Bonaparte, as he has observed, is a man not sent by Providence to fulfil the purposes which he pretends that he is destined to accomplish, but appointed to teach us the necessity of laying aside our party differences, and of uniting for the preservation of a constitution, which, whatever may be its faults, appears invaluable, when put in competition with the system introduced by the present French despot.

Lord Grenville, and others in the House of Lords, who seem to act in concert with Mr. Windham's party in the Commons, declaim vehemently, both against the language and many of the measures of administration, and call loudly for a change of men, on the ground that the present ministers have already lost the confidence of the nation. Mr. Pitt, whose disposition to support Mr. Addington remains, as we do not doubt, unaltered, has been absent at Bath on account of health.

The conduct of ministry has been of a prudent and moderate kind. Their language has been that of men inclined to maintain, if possible, the peace which they have made. They have carefully avoided that war of words, in which some others have indulged, and which the public prints have so much encouraged; while their measures have shewn them determined to be at all times well prepared to resist aggression. They have adopted, as we conceive, the line which good sense suggests, and have fallen in with the general sentiments of the nation.

This change in the state of parties may suggest to our readers some matter of reflection. It shews that political men have often had fewer points of agreement, as well as of disagreement, than they appeared to have; and it may, therefore, teach us candour and moderation in our judgment of them. A calm observer is almost disposed to smile at the violence which the opposition party has begun to manifest. The charges of ignorance and incapacity, mismanagement in respect to foreign politics, and continual breaches of the constitution, which used to be preferred against former administration, are again repeated in our ears. Undoubtedly, charges of this kind may be just, but even then they are, for the most part, exaggerated. In general, however, the heat of party, full as much perhaps as the desire of place, gives birth to these vehement accusations. And it is worthy of remark, that even those measures of government are now opposed or cavilled at, respecting which it might be supposed beforehand, that only one opinion could be entertained; we particularly allude to the very laudable exertions which are making to effect a reformation of abuses in the Dock Yards, and other departments of our naval service.

THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER, we trust, will never be disposed to encourage a state of indifference, respecting the pretensions of different political men; or to recommend a security which may be dangerous to the country. Our readers, however, must not expect that we can adopt all the warmth or jealousy, or all the apprehensions of each successive set of guardians of the country and the constitution. Our attention, indeed, is chiefly turned to the means of moral and religious improvement, and, whoever guides the helm of state, we, as passengers, shall not complain, provided they give us tolerable security; while, at the same time, as persons interested in the safety of the vessel, we shall be ready to lend our hand, in any manner which may seem most expedient, when we hear the cry of danger. We look, in the mean time, to an overruling Providence, who has the hearts of all men under his secret guidance,

and we would wait without dismay for whatever events he may see fit to send us.

We congratulate our country on the favourable state of our finances. Mr. Addington has stated that a permanent British peace establishment, scarcely inferior to that which we now possess, may be maintained out of our present income; and he has also given notice, in order to defray the six or eight millions of extraordinary expenses of the present year, which the war has entailed, no loan will be necessary, the conversion of Exchequer Bills into Stock, being the measure intended to be resorted to. In consequence of this, the funds have risen rapidly, and omnium is now at a discount of not more than from 2 to 3 per cent.

The goodness of Divine Providence, in favouring us with a plentiful harvest, is another subject of comfortable reflection at the close of the present year.

On the whole, Great Britain has abundant cause for thankfulness. Her temporal prosperity is great; her trade and manufactures are thriving; her re-

sources, so long as we remain at peace, are continually increasing; her empire is enlarged and consolidated; her naval and military power is strong for every purpose of self-defence, beyond the example of former periods; and discontent and faction are greatly lessened. Her rival, indeed, is also powerful, beyond all former precedent; and the actions of the Chief Consul shew, that we can place no confidence in his professions. Our chief danger, however, is from ourselves; and there are vices in a state, which arise even out of its prosperity. Let us cultivate a pure and mild religion, as the best corrective, as well as preventive, of every national evil; a religion, out of which subordination, order, and morality, grow as from their natural root; a religion, which, though not of this world, leads to every worldly benefit that is worth possessing; and then, being strong in the favour of the Almighty, we shall be in little danger from our enemies; and may consider ourselves to be in possession of real peace, happiness, and security.

OBITUARY.

To the Christian Observer.

SIR,

As you seem ready to admit into your Obituary any authentic account of deceased persons, who are eminently pious or useful in their generation, I beg leave to transmit to you a character of this kind. He was one of your constant readers, and a member of my congregation during five and twenty years. The sad event, which has shed a gloom far beyond the circle in which I move, was thus announced to the public, in one of the York papers. "On Friday, November 26th, died of a violent fever, to the unspeakable grief of his family and friends, Mr. John Hepworth, merchant, one of the sheriffs of this city. He was a person of the most active benevolence and strict integrity; a good husband and father; a generous friend; a loyal subject; a useful citizen and a sincere Christian. The loss of such a man, who had scarcely reached the 40th year of his age, will be long remembered and deeply regretted." This testimony is true. The loss sustained, not only by his family and friends, but by society at large, will not easily be repaired. To me, whom he considered as his spiritual father, and the guide of his youth, he was ever kind and attentive, and I can say of him what I think, Dr. Johnson said of his friend Mr. Thrale, "those eyes are closed, which never beheld me but with mingled love

and reverence." He received the great doctrines of the Gospel, with all readiness of mind, and uniformly acted under the influence of them, from early youth to the end of his days. A principle of religious reverence, of faith and love towards our Lord Jesus Christ, evidently appeared, not only in public and social worship, but in every transaction and relation of life in which he was engaged. The diligence and success with which he conducted his mercantile concerns, was not greater than that with which he served God and his generation. His religious and social affections were always in action. Every charitable institution, within his reach, enjoyed his countenance and liberal support. Not content, like many others, with giving his money freely, he gave also, what they are not disposed to give, his time and his labour, and in one or more instances rendered effectual service to a public charity, by detecting abuses, and retrieving its finances from the injurious effects of jobs and misapplication. In all such exertions, as well as in his religious profession, he was undaunted and persevering. No frowns or sneers could drive him from his purpose. He feared God and had no other fear. He was never weary in well doing whatever ungrateful treatment he met with.

His private deeds of mercy are fully known to him only, who will reward them at the last

day; but the widow's tears that have been shed at his death, and the many poor families which have risen up and called him blessed, shew that these charities were large and extensive.

Every call of duty he cheerfully obeyed, however it might hurt his ease and interest. He gave a remarkable proof of this when he joined some of his peaceable and loyal fellow citizens in arming for the maintenance of social order, during the late times of danger and alarm. He was one of that respectable body of cavalry, which was formed in the city of York, and underwent the trouble and expense attending it with his usual zeal and spirit. His religion had taught him not to meddle with them that are given to change; but to fear God, honour the King, and obey every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. Hence his loyalty and attachment to the constitution of his country, both in Church and State, remained unshaken, amidst the spirit of faction and insubordination that appeared in this and other places of the land. He was a steady and consistent member of the established Church, though without bigotry. He loved all, in every denomination of Christians, who appeared to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, without approving the divisions and scismatical proceedings that have disgraced the late revivals of practical religion. In his temper he was generous, candid, and forgiving; for he had much of that excellent grace of "charity, which suffereth long and is kind; which thinketh no evil, but hopeth all things, and endureth all things; which rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth." His death, which happened on the very day when he had invited the leading members of the corporation, and some of the principal inhabitants, to the usual feast given by the sheriffs of York, affords a lesson of instruction to the living, which may be disregarded but cannot be misunderstood. The fever which carried him off, and from which no danger was at first apprehended, soon increased to such an alarming height as to overwhelm all his mental faculties, and render him incapable of expressing either his hopes or his fears. Should we judge of his Christian character and future doom by the dying sayings which he uttered, we might consider both as dubious. But no one, who was well acquaint-

ed with this godly and faithful man, and is qualified to form a right judgment on the subject, will hesitate in pronouncing him to have been a child of God and an heir of salvation.

W. R.

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We are sorry to be obliged to defer the insertion of a Letter from SENEX, giving an account of the death of another son, but it will appear in our next.

DEATHS.

On Friday, Dec. 10, at the house of the Rev. James Bean, in Carshalton, Miss Higgins. This lady, though frequently in extreme danger from habitual ill-health, was called out of the world at a time, when neither she, nor those about her, had any apprehension of the event. This circumstance deserves notice as a particular warning to those sickly persons, who from unexpected recoveries frequently repeated, grow familiar with danger, and are at last surprised by death, though often loudly summoned to prepare for their departure. Happy, however, will it be for all our readers, if they be found as ready for the change, as the person was whose unexpected end suggests these serious reflections.

At York, Hugh Robinson, Esq. a Rear Admiral in the Navy.

In the 68th year of his age, Mr. Sewell, Bookseller, of Cornhill.

Nov. 6. The Rev. Pell Akehurst, Rector of Buckland, Hertfordshire.

Aged 71, Mr. Allan, of Sloane Street.

Nov. 9. At Cambridge, Rev. John Warter, M. A. of Shrewsbury.

Nov. 11. At Longworth, Berks, in the 90th year of his age, the Rev. John Williams, Rector of that Parish.

Nov. 17. At Frostenden, in Suffolk, the Rev. Christopher Sincar.

Lately, in his 91st year, Rowles Scudamore, Esq. a justice of the peace for Gloucestershire, and the oldest barrister in England.

Nov. 22. Mrs. Robertson, wife of the Rev. A. Robertson, Savilian Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford.

Dec. 15. At Shadwell, Thomas Dykes, Esq. of a sudden and violent spasm in his stomach.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A FRIEND, whom we highly value, having expressed an opinion, that our notes on Mr. Bogue's Letter, pp. 738 and 740, tended to establish in their full latitude, the doctrines of *divine right* and *passive obedience*, we think it right to say a few words on the subject, with a view of satisfying our respectable correspondent, as well as any other of our readers who may have adopted a similar idea. The note, p. 738, is no more than a *partial* extract from our Review of Mr. Bogue's Essay, pp. 113, 114. By turning to pp. 115 and 116, of the same review, it will be seen that several guards were interposed to prevent the inference which our friend has drawn. We wish, however, particularly to refer him to our Number for May, p. 322, where

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he will find our views expressed, with still more precision, by B. T. of whose sentiments we have testified our approbation. We shall only add, that in mentioning Acts v 29, as affording the only scriptural limitation to the command of yielding submission to Civil Government, we meant to consider the duty of *obeying God rather than man*, not merely as confined to that *undisguised and compulsory alternative* to which St. Peter was brought; but as including all those cases, in which we may be required to depart from the general rule of submission, by the will of God, either clearly expressed in scripture or fairly and legitimately deducible from it; for his will, we would strenuously maintain, must ever be the measure, not only of submission or resistance to Civil Government, but of every duty whatsoever.

The following communications have recently come to hand, viz. JUVENIS; J. F. H.; ECCLESIAE ALUMNUS; P.; CLERICUS SURRIENSIS; T. S. F.; P. J.; J. S.; O. E. A.; E. F. G.; and JAMES.

We are greatly indebted to the modesty and candour of S. R. O., and we avail ourselves of it. We recognise with pleasure the hand-writing and name of W. R.

If T. B. will read Archbishop Usher's Answer to the Challenge of a Jesuit, article "Of the Limbus Patrum and Christ's descent into hell;" and also Pearson on the Creed, he will probably meet with a satisfactory solution of his difficulties.

J. P. N. if he turn to the 3rd chapter of St. Luke, will find, that not only was Joseph the reputed father of Christ, but his mother, Mary also, lineally descended from David. With the utmost accuracy, therefore, has that prophecy been fulfilled to which J. P. N. refers, Psalm cxxxii. ver 11. "of the *fruit of thy body* will I set upon thy throne;" nor does it appear necessary to resort to the mode proposed by him of considering a mere alliance of affinity as a sufficient fulfilment of it.

F.'s communication contains some good things, but expressed in so quaint a style, that we cannot with propriety insert it.

We have replied by post to the favour of A. CONSCIENTIOUS DEACON.

The communication of a FRIEND, we shall insert with pleasure.

CUSTOS on the propriety of uniting the ministerial and magisterial functions, will appear in our next.

We are greatly obliged to a correspondent who subscribes himself O., for his friendly counsel, which we take in good part, and shall endeavour to profit by. With some of his opinions, however, we do not cordially concur; and we take this mode of expressing our dissent, only because he has given us no opportunity of private communication. Our correspondent censures us for recommending the writings of Dissenters, and he particularizes the sermons of Mr. Jay. If he could have shewn either that our commendation, in this instance, had been excessive or unjust, or that the sermons in question contained principles inimical to the Church of England, we should have stood corrected for our want of discrimination and vigilance. But if, whatever be their imperfections, they tend, in these degenerate days, to raise the tone of practical piety, without betraying any sectarian leanings, we think ourselves bound to recommend them. Even the Anti-Jacobin Reviewers have candour enough to yield their tribute of almost unqualified commendation to Fuller and Hall, some of whose writings we concur with them in wishing to be widely diffused. But upon our correspondent's principles, we must banish from our libraries not only Fuller and Hall, but Owen, and Baxter, and Leland, and Lardner, and Watts, and Doddridge, unless a certain lapse of years is to be considered as divesting the writings of Dissenters of their power to injure either the Church or State. We are hopeless of retaining the cordial support of any individuals, who think we ought to adopt such principles. And if the pious, zealous, and useful clergyman, to whom our correspondent alludes, and for whose character we entertain a very profound respect, should execute his purpose of exchanging ours for a more congenial work, we may regret his determination, but we cannot, therefore, change our plan or recede from our principles. After the above censure, we were not greatly surprised that O. should think the Christian Observer "not sufficiently decided for the church," and that its conductors have been "desirous to curry favour with Dissenters." On this point, he and SECTARIUS PACIFICUS (see p. 805) are at issue. Had O. perused the answers to correspondents in our last number, he would, probably, have thought his remarks on our blue cover unnecessary.

The correspondent who has kindly pointed out what he conceives to be a mistake with respect to Irenaeus and Polycarp, we apprehend has not read the passage with sufficient attention. (See p. 729, col. 1, line 1 to 24.)

We ought to apologize to the author of the *Sunday Water Party*, for the delay which has taken place in inserting it, and which was owing chiefly to its length. We hope to be favoured with his future correspondence.

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